Sunday, May 31, 2009 • Vol. 24 / No. 172 www.inquirer.net

PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THE WORKS Fireworks celebrate the opening of the Sky Garden at SM City North Edsa Mall in Quezon City on Friday. The Sky Garden is an elevated park with cafés, bars, waterfalls with a lifestyle attitude committed to keep stretches of the urban jungle green as green can be. The latest addition to SM City North Edsa, the country's first SM mall, defines its continuing redevelopment as an environmentally intensive area as it is a behemoth of business and commerce. The Sky Garden expands the North Edsa mall to 433,000 square meters making it the world's third largest. ROY VINCENTE

Party leaders woo FVR

Palace men explain merger of 2 parties to Lakas founder

By Alcuin Papa, Michael Lim Ubac and Philip C. Tubeza

LIKE PENITENT YOUNGSTERS EAGER TO APPEASE AFTER causing a revered parent great vexation and annoyance, ruling party leaders yesterday were all over themselves attempting to mollify former President Fidel Ramos.

Gabriel Claudio, the presidential adviser on political affairs, said he and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita would be meeting last night with the former President to explain the merger of the Lakas-CMD with the Rebolusyonaryong Malayang Pilipinas (Kampi).

"I'm ready to be lectured and even more ready to act on his suggestions," said Claudio.

"I'm quite used to getting a dressing-down. He was my former boss and he has been like a father to all of us in the party," he said.

Ramos, Lakas' founding chair emeritus, snubbed the ceremony to mark the merger of the Lakas-CMD and Kampi last Thursday, where he was supposed to have delivered an inspirational message. He called a press conference the next day to denounce the "unclear haste" with which the merger was done and the "dictation" and lack of consultation.

House Speaker Prospero Nograles conceded that party leaders should have spent more time consulting with Ramos, but though they wanted to, he said, the ex-President was on a foreign trip.

'Guiding light'

"I think that he needed more quality time to meet with us but we had a time line and he was abroad," Nograles said.

"But we had absolutely no bad intention here so we can still address his

PARTY A2

Lakas-Kampi shrugs off Mar's 'Palaka' label

By Alcuin Papa and Michael Lim Ubac

A FROG, BY ANY OTHER NAME, IS STILL A FROG.

While opposition Sen. Manuel Roxas II has suggested that the merged Lakas-Kampi-CMD party be called "Partidong Lakas at Kampi" or Palaka (frog) for short, Malacañang believes its new party will "leapfrog over the opposition" en route to victory in the 2010 elections.

Secretary Gabriel Claudio, political adviser of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said in a phone interview that the administration camp did not feel insulted by the Palaka moniker given by Roxas to the party.

"We don't mind it at all," said Claudio, adding:

LAKAS-KAMPI A2

TOP TOQUE AT THE WHITE HOUSE Cristeta Pasia Comerford

White House chef shares Obamas' dining secrets

By Ruben V. Nepales
Los Angeles correspondent

WASHINGTON, DC—US PRESIDENT Barack Obama likes simple meals with fish, steamed vegetables and brown rice.

This and other interesting details were shared by Cristeta Pasia Comerford, the Filipina executive chef at the White House, in an interview with the bayanan at the famous address: 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Cris, as she is called by her family and colleagues, has been top toque since 2005 when she was appointed by First Lady Laura Bush. Last January, the Obamas decided to retain Comerford as their chef and partner for healthy eating.

In a statement announcing that Comerford will stay on as the administration's head chef, Michelle Obama noted that the Filipina, who grew up in Santapalos, Manila, is "also the mom of a young daughter." The First Lady stated, "I appreciate our shared perspective on the importance of healthy eating and healthy families."

Comerford, 44, united in the Old Family Dining Room, where a few days later her boss would share a private lunch with visiting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, shared her

WHITE A7

Pampanga is backdrop for Cannes' best director

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon
and Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE HISTORIC PROVINCE OF PAMpanga often figures as the landscape and playground for the over-the-top ideas of Cannes Film Festival award-winning director Brillante "Dante" Mendoza.

Mendoza, who was born and raised in the small barrio of San Isidro in San Fernando, says the local scenery has had a profound influence on his art.

"The province is very rich visually," says Mendoza, who spent most of his young life in Pampanga which he left only when he went to study fine arts at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

His father, Pastor Mendoza, was a farmer, and his mother, Gerardia Mendoza, a homemaker who took in embroidery work on the side.

"I think I got my love for plants and gardening from my father and my love for the arts from my mother," he says.

PAMPANGA A9

Bahay-bahayan: Halfway house for Aeta schoolkids

By Elizabeth Laliga
Contributor

THEIR DAYS OF HUNTING AND FORaging in the forests are almost at an end. And 38 Aeta children and their parents have realized that education is the key to survival in the world beyond their mountain homes in Barangay Bayan-bayanan, Dinalupihan, Bataan.

But even with a public school in place, the matter of the children getting there and returning to their homes afterward presents a problem. The Bayan-bayanan Elementary School is a 14-kilometer walk from where they live.

It's no wonder that absenteeism and dropout rates go up during the rainy season. And even if they stay home during these inconvenient days, there is not much—sometimes nothing—to eat.

Bahay Kalinga, where the children can stay during the week before trekking back to their homes on weekends, serves to solve that problem.

It is what one may call a bahay-bahayan—a halfway house that Evelyn Reyes San Buenaventura, a hometown girl who made good in the big city as a practicing accountant, has established for friends at Quezon International and Rotary Club of Makati-Southside to help build and sustain.

BAHAY-BAHAYAN A2

WHAT IS IT? It looked like a stairway to the sunset sky to several onlookers on Wednesday at 5:12 p.m. It is not a normal occurrence, concedes Bernie de Leon of Pagasa, but it can happen due to thunderstorm clouds which cause tornados or waterspouts to form. Asked if a tornado sighting in the summer (its called rmaby) can be credited to global warming, Pagasa says it is possible but not conclusive. Tornados form when cold polar air meets warm tropical air resulting in a great instability caused by the rising warm air.

Kapatiran taps simple man with moral duty

By Robert Gonzaga
Inquirer Central Luzon

OLONGAPO CITY—ANG KAPATIRAN Party's presidential nominee is, in his own words, a simple man with a moral duty.

"Win or lose, I will make an impact," declared the 39-year-old John Carlos "JC" delos Reyes, a member of the Gordon political clan and the only Kapatiran candidate who won in the 2007 elections—as a councilor of Olongapo.

"Engaging in politics is a moral du-

KAPATIRAN A2

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with rains. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy skies. Fishermen in the areas will be advised of the storm's track as it moves in the direction of Mainland China.

Manila	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Cotabato	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Legaspi	Cloudy with Rains	San Jose	Cloudy with Rains
Virac	Cloudy with Rains	Puerto Princesa	Cloudy with Rains
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2 4
4 23

SUERTRES
5 7 8
5 5 0
7 1 4

SIX DIGIT (No winner yet)
7 6 1 5 6 8

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2 8 10 15 38 42
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POWER LOTTO 6/55+1/10
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P59,479,182.00

1 firm left after bidder backs out

'Sluggish, inconsistent, irregular' bid process for poll automation hit

By Kristine L. Alave

THE FILIPINO-AMERICAN JOINT VENTURE OF AMA Group Holdings and Election Systems and Software Inc. (ES&S) yesterday backed out of the bidding for the P11-billion poll automation contract, leaving the consortium of Smartmatic International and Total Information Management Corp. (TIM) as the sole bidder.

In a motion filed with the Comelec's Special Bids and Awards Committee yesterday, AMA/ES&S expressed dismay over the sluggish bidding process, which is entering its fourth week, about two weeks behind schedule.

The consortium also accused the procurement panel of being inconsistent and bringing in its own rules which made it difficult for them to comply with eligibility, technical and financial requirements.

"While we recognize the necessity of the BSMC and its members in their resistance desire to avoid the mistakes of past failed bidding, the AMA/ES&S joint venture no longer feels confident in the integrity of the entire process. With much regret, it is therefore compelled to withdraw its motion for reconsideration," the consortium said in a two-page resolution.

"The joint venture appreciates the transparency observed by the SBAC in an attempt to make the process competitive. The joint venture, however, agrees with the views expressed by the other bidder that the SBAC changed the requirements midway into the process, that it was inconsistent with its rulings, and that it was unfamiliar with the documents required to be submitted as part of the bid," the manifestation said.

Johnny Ramos, AMA group project director, said the decision was reached by both parties on Saturday. Ramos and John Grisham, senior vice president of the Netherlands-based ES&S, signed the manifestation.

"We are not interested anymore. It's just too much," Ramos told reporters. He said they were disappointed at SBAC's reaction to Smartmatic-TIM when one of its members (redacted) during meeting. Despite the smoke that came from the machines' arms, the SBAC still allowed Smartmatic-TIM to continue.

Before it pulled out of the bidding, AMA/ES&S was the last company with an active bid, aside from Smartmatic-TIM. Three more seven consortia that submitted bid documents on May 4, but they were disqualified for various reasons.

AMA/ES&S was declared ineligible as bid choice because of deficiencies in its eligibility and technical documents. In two instances, the SBAC granted the consortium's requests. Last week, the SBAC declared the company ineligible again, but before the panel could issue a decision on this reasoning the company had already withdrawn its appeal.

SBAC chair Ferdinand Rabaan discussed the complaints and expressed on the panel, saying "confidence is on a personal level." "It's from one group, one bidder, we cannot prevent that," he said.

Rabaan noted the possibility that the consortium took itself out of the running because its financial bid was higher than the P7.2-billion tender of Smartmatic-TIM.

Ultimately, whether or not the SBAC accepts AMA/ES&S' appeal means little if its bid is much higher than its competitors, Rabaan said.

"If their bid is lowest, we will open their machines. But if their bid is higher, we won't open it anymore," he said.

Rabaan said the machines of the Netherlands-based investments and Filipino information technology solutions provider TIM passed the technical and functional tests last June days.

The machines, he noted, read the ballots but can't read the ballots' "1.00 percent accuracy."

Rabaan said the BSMC was "relieved" ready to award the contract, but stopped short of saying that it would be given to Smartmatic-TIM, noting that the bid process was not yet complete.

NEW ROUTE TO HAM. President Macapagal-Arroyo leads the inaugural drive on the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Expressway before boarding a flight for Korea yesterday. With her are Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Pasay Rep. Antonio Kiwas, Parañaque Rep. Ed Zialcita, Pasig Rep. Roman Romulo and Parañaque Mayor Jun Bermino. (Story on Page A3.) KNG

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Asean aims to strengthen ties with Korea at summit

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo flew to South Korea yesterday to join heads of governments of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) on summer, crowning the 20th anniversary of the establishment of dialogue relations between Asean and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

The Asean-ROK summit will be held on July 1and on June 1-2.

The President left Manila after swearing in the country's new ambassador to Ireland, Aniel Abadilla, and inaugurated the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Expressway. (See photo on Page A2.)

Mr. Arroyo will make a brief stopover in Seoul for bilateral talks with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak and meetings with the Filipino community.

From Seoul, Mr. Arroyo will proceed to Japan.

According to Malacañang, the summit will have two sessions.

In Session One, the leaders will review the status of Asean-ROK dialogue relations and find ways to strengthen ties in the political, security, economic and sociocultural fields.

In Session Two, the leaders will seek ways to further strengthen cooperation, especially in addressing global challenges such as the financial crisis, energy security and climate change.

Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said earlier that the meeting between President Arroyo and President Lee would be an "opportunity for the two leaders to discuss the state of bilateral relations and chart a new direction for a stronger and more meaningful bilateral future, especially in the economic field."

Remonde said the commemorative summit, on the other hand, would "affirm the two countries' collaboration with the rest of the region and the international community in the face of global economic and security challenges."

The Republic of Korea is one of the Philippines' major partners with trade between the two reaching an estimated $5.06 billion.

South Korean investments in the Philippines are at over $1 billion, topping the list of foreign domestic investment inflow. More than 600,000 South Korean tourists visit the country annually, the largest share of visitor arrivals here.

Manilla, who met through the trade in the foreign service, took his oath before Mr. Arroyo at 10:40 a.m. in the VIP Lounge of Ninoy Aquino International.

A career service officer, Abadilla, passed the foreign service exam in 1978 with the rank of Chief of Minister Counselor.

Since 1995 he has held postings in New York, Houston, Seattle, Beijing, Sydney and Washington D.C. His latest assignment was consul general in Kuwait. Michael Lim Ubac

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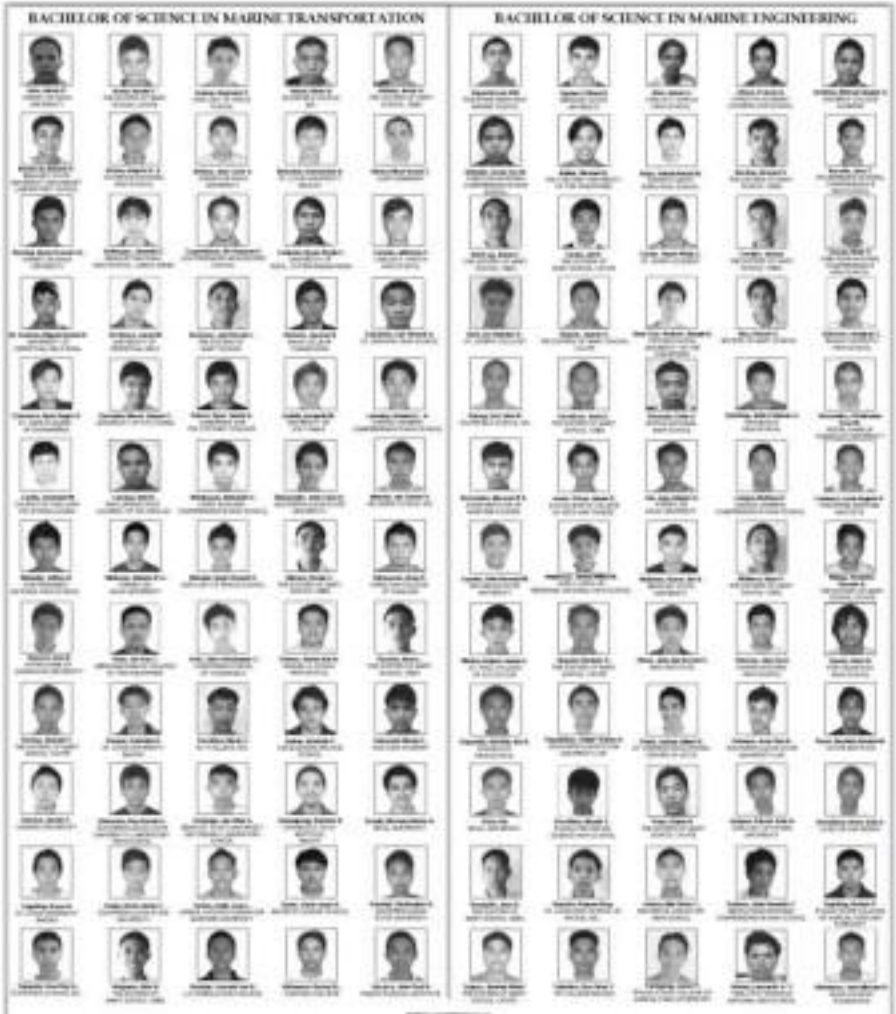

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LIT DISABLED WORK National Council on Disability Affairs chair Lorely Ruer T. Rosuelo calls on the more than 100 delegates to the First Asia Pacific Conference of Workability International to draw up plans to create an economic calendar event to enable way for skilled citizens with disabilities to become part of the different countries' productive workforce." She also commended Tabanag Walang Hagdanan for holding the conference at Sofia Shangri-La hotel in Mandaluyong City.

More Pinays to join UN peacekeepers

THE PHILIPPINES WILL DEPLOY MORE women to United Nations' peacekeeping missions given this year's UN theme of greater involvement by women in such efforts, Foreign Secretary Roberto Romulo said.

"Filipino peacekeepers are recognized by the United Nations for their outstanding performance and tireless commitment to global peace and security," Romulo said during the commemoration of International Day of UN Peacekeepers at the Department of Foreign Affairs on Friday.

He assured the UN that Filipino women peacekeepers were on par with their male counterparts.

Ranking women of western leaders and activists besieged in UN headquarters in New York City to celebrate the eighth anniversary of the signing of a statement recognizing women's involvement in peace and security issues. UN Resolution 1325 calls on member states to protect women in conflict and to bring more women into peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction.

Romulo also assured the world body of the Philippine government's commitment to peacekeeping efforts all over the globe.

"As we pay tribute to the noble sacrifices of all UN peacekeepers, we reaffirm our resolve and collective commitment to building a world at peace," he said.

During the event, the Dag Hammarskjold Medal was presented to Esmeralda Rosella, widow of Philippine Army Lt. Col. Ernesto Rosella who died of leukemia on Oct. 26, 2004, while serving with the UN mission in Sudan.

Cynthia D. Balloon

Computer crash was GSIS' fault, says contractor

A TECHNOLOGY CONTRACTOR THREATened with a lawsuit by the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) for the malfunctioning of its computer database has found the blame back to the government pension fund.

Questronix Corp., which supplied the GSIS database software package, said the pension fund managers themselves caused their computers to crash because of poor database management and lack of standard backup measures.

Questronix said that the GSIS used the system in an "unusual" way that led to a crash twice.

Last week, GSIS officials sent Questronix a demand letter, saying the crashes caused the agency "incalculable damage" and recalled a backlog of applications for loans, including 20,000 filings for claims mostly by newly retired members.

In a letter to the GSIS dated May 28, Questronix countered that if the pension fund had submitted to disaster recovery and implemented proper backup-and-restore procedures, its members would not have been left hanging by the crash.

Questronix is the local systems integrator for the GSIS database that brought together sub-systems from German software application vendor SAP-AG, which included software developed and licensed by IBM Corp.

GSIS claimed it was supplied with "defective software" and has threatened a series of suits against IBM, SAP-AG and Questronix.

In a statement to the bourse, IBM Philippines had countered that GSIS did not engage IBM for the selection, customization and implementation of the system.

IBM said its DB2 was packaged with an application that was part of a global OEM (original equipment manufacturer) arrangement between SAP and IBM. Several

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Swine flu won't stop school opening

Health, education officials set guidelines, put up alert system

By Dona Pazzibugan
and Ethan C. Tandoc Jr.

DESPITE THE INFLUENZA scare, it's all systems go for the opening of classes tomorrow with 22 million elementary and high school students expected to troop to schools for the first day of class, Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said yesterday.

The suspension of classes due to threats of an influenza A (H1N1) outbreak will be done on a case-to-case basis, according to the Department of Health.

No compelling reason

"At this time, there is no compelling reason to suspend the opening of classes on Monday, June 1," Health Secretary Francisco Duque III announced after a conference among the DOH, Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City yesterday.

Two more persons tested positive for the AH1N1 virus, bringing the number to 18 confirmed cases. The latest cases were a 31-year-old man and his 31-year-old son who arrived from the United States on May 26.

They manifested "very mild flu symptoms" of cough and fever on May 28, according to the DOH.

"We only have 18 confirmed cases so far and they are all confined in health facilities. There have been discharged and have fully recovered. There is no sustained community level transmission of H1N1 anywhere in the country," Duque stressed.

Under the guidelines contained in School Response Level System, school administrators may suspend classes in their schools if there are one or more confirmed cases among their students, faculty or school personnel.

When the DOH assesses that there is already community transmission, the Duplid and CHED may announce the closure of one or more schools in the affected area.

Students and school personnel who have flu-like symptoms like fever, cold and cough or sore throat should not report to school but should isolate at home.

While in school, those identified to have influenza-like symptoms will be isolated in a designated room before they are sent home.

Self-quarantine

Duque said students who come from countries in affected countries should self-quarantine for 10 days, or at least 24 to 48 hours after recovering from the flu symptoms.

"We call on schools to give those students special consideration and help them catch up with their missed lessons," he said.

Education Undersecretary Francisco Benzon said parents would play an integral role in the monitoring system. "Responsible parents will not send their children to school if they have fever."

Meanwhile, the DepEd and DOH are adopting an alert level system similar to the country's typhoon signals.

"The intensity of intervention will depend on the alert level," Lapus said.

He notified schools to prepare to suspend classes, answering back those questions: "Which schools? Up to how long? The whole year? What is important is we do not panic."

Alert levels 1 to 4

Benzon explained that the country (and parents) don't need to know the alert level of a school. Only the school principal or designated person has to know.

Alert Level 1 is raised if there is a confirmed case in a school. This could be basis for the school principal to suspend classes.

If confirmed cases are declared in several schools in a community, Alert Level 4 could be raised and classes in the community will be suspended, he said.

The specific details of the alert level system, which mentions as a particular response to a particular number of cases, is expected to be publicly disclosed today.

The public may also forward their queries and complaints to DepEd through its Hotline Education Command Center Hotlines: 6361361, 6361942, 6340122, 6359827, 6365602, 6364830, 6366558, 6397529, 6397535, 6397551 and 7260332. The center is open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. With reports from Philip C. Tubeza, Cynthia D. Rebong and AFP

HEALTH SECRETARY Francisco Duque III, Education Undersecretary Ramon Bacani and Commission on Higher Education Executive Director Julito Vitriolo (from right) hold media orientation for tomorrow's school opening in the time of swine flu. They confirmed two more cases of infection bringing to 18 the number of patients in the country. GRACE PEÑA

Beware of helpful strangers, and other tips for students

By Tara Yap Quimpo

BE EXTRA CAREFUL WHEN strangers come up to you offering help of any kind.

This was the advice of the Philippine National Police to students scurrying to be finished from errands, strolling inside malls, riding public transport, or simply walking on the streets.

As police intensified security measures around school zones to brace for the opening of classes on Monday, PNP officials showed cases that with students who might be smart-talked by friendly solicitous persons pretending to want to help them.

"We advise students not to be too trusting of people they do not know and who may just take advantage of them," said PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Eleazar Buvit-Matta.

He pointed out that students residing but a few hours, Police Anti-Cyber Emergency Response chief Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina offered the spice of advice.

"Tell your children not to wait for you or their nanny outside the school premises, and not to go with anybody who claims he or she was asked to pick them up," he said. "Tell your kids to check with the household first if someone who is not their parent or nanny says mother/dad is picking them up."

He said schools must also establish controlled loading and unloading zones for students to minimize order at pickup points during dropoff or dismissal hours. Security measures inside and around school premises would also be an advantage, he added.

The police official also reminded schools to check the background of all on-campus employees.

"Enhance security measures in schools. Research extensively background checks of school and security personnel and employees and by monitoring suspicious looking persons and vehicles," Espina said.

"If possible, go home in groups," he added. Whether walking on the street or driving their own vehicles, students must avoid isolated, poorly lit and less frequented areas.

Espina also advised students to refrain from urinating freely or ejaculate jewelry in public that could catch the seeing eye of criminals.

"At night, walk only on well-lighted and busy streets. Beware of vehicles following you. Take note of the vehicle's details and proceed to the nearest police station, relatives or friends for assistance," he added.

He said the PNP would boost the police presence not only in public areas expected to be crowded with students, but also in other thoroughfares and commercial establishments near the schools.

'RP should reset antipoverty goals due to world crisis'

By Michelle V. Rarus

THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC downturn, which recently pulled the Philippine down to its slowest growth in a decade, will result in the country's failure to meet its poverty-reduction goal by 2010 and is expected to increase the number of poor Filipinos.

Socioeconomic Planning Undersecretary Cielo Magno said the Philippines and other member-countries of the United Nations are signatories, extreme poverty shall have been eradicated by 2015.

Considered with this goal, the Philippines set a target of reducing poverty incidence to 17-20 percent of Filipino families by 2010 from 20.9 percent in 2006.

Economic officials, however, admitted that the global crisis, considered the worst since the Great Depression of the 1930s, has made the poverty-reduction goal of the Philippines and other member-countries impossible to achieve.

Dinna Guinigundo, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas deputy governor and a former economics professor, for one, said the timetable for bringing down poverty incidence to 20 percent or less by 2010, and eradicating extreme poverty by 2015 should be adjusted.

"There is scope for delaying the goals. The crisis has led to the deceleration of growth, thus affecting consumption levels," Guinigundo said Friday.

He noted that with the Philippine population growing faster than its economy, per capita income was naturally reduced.

Per capita income

Per capita income, a rough measure of the income of individuals in an economy, is due to the output of the economy divided by its population.

Per estimates, annual per capita income in the Philippines stood at $1,830 as of 2008. Government data show the population growth rate is at 2.1 percent.

In the first quarter, the Philippine economy narrowed in terms of its gross domestic product (GDP), posted an annual growth of 0.4 percent in real terms, its lowest in 10 years.

GDP, the most common measure of an economy, is the sum of the value of goods produced and services rendered within an economy in a given period.

The Philippine economy's backbone performance rested the country off track from meeting its growth target of between 3.1 and 4.1 percent for the full year, and is in fact bound to signal a recession in the months ahead.

Anemic global demand

Economists blamed the slowdown to the plunge in exports, which came hardly hit by anemic global demand. The United States and Europe, three of the global turmoil, are two of the Philippines' biggest export markets.

As a result of dwindling remittances, some export-oriented firms were reported to have reduced their workforce.

The Northern Economic and Development Authority (Neda) said earlier the economy needed to grow by at least 7 percent once normal years to enable to reduce poverty incidence.

Officials said, however, that measures were being taken to prevent the economy from sliding.

The BSP has implemented a series of rate cuts to bring down bank lending rates, which is expected to spur business activity.

The government also committed to boost public spending in the months ahead to help create jobs and increase aggregate incomes.

Rotarians help fight disease

FRANCISCO

OVER 4,000 Binay City children were immunized for free against diphtheria last week in the Dr. Jose P. Rizal Memorial District Hospital.

The immunization project held jointly by Mayor Nieves Rosario "Nenet" Tinsted and the Rotary clubs of Binay North and Binay East.

Children aged 4 to 6 received free diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccinations at the event held May 23-24 at the Binay Sports Plaza and Makiling Sports Gym.

Supported by the Binay Social Welfare Department headed by Susy Cruz and by Dr. Cesa Embrano, chief health officer, the project was also done with Rotary International's theme for 2008-2009, "Make Dreams Real," which emphasizes children's health and the eradication of polio globally.

The DOH has implemented a series of free days to bring down bank lending rates, which is expected to spur business activity.

The government also committed to boost public spending in the months ahead to help create jobs and increase aggregate incomes.

Japanese to help RP addicts recover

By Nico Catherine Calleja

JAPANESE AGENCIES AND a Filipino nongovernment organization have launched a three-year program to beef up drug rehabilitation efforts in Metro Manila's poor communities.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is pouring P5 million into the program, which will be implemented by the Japan-based Asia Pacific Academy for Research Consultancy (Apark) and the local family Welfare Center (FWC).

There are an estimated 1.7 million drug users in the country for many of them are poor and cannot afford rehabilitation in private facilities, said Dangerous Drugs Board Undersecretary Edgar Galvante during the program launch last week at the Makati Sports Club.

Many drug dependents and their families don't even have time to seek a thing called rehabilitation, FWC vice chair Rose Calderon said.

The cooperative program, he said, aims to give drug dependents train-poor commercial rice across to treatment and rehabilitation.

Calderon noted that private rehabilitation centers that had been set up in Metro Manila and nearby provinces over the past decade were quite expensive, requiring fees for months of home maintenance and the services of doctors and other professionals.

To ease the new program, five volunteers from Manila are all be selected for a two-week training and exposure tour of Japan's rehabilitation facilities.

Makoto Oda, Japan's country director, said these people will be trained to establish "recovery meetings" in poor areas.

The project proponents will also conduct surveys on the prevalence of drug use in selected communities and familiarize themselves with the justice system for drug cases.

Only one private rehabilitation facilities in Japan are a 12-step program to help drug users recover, Think Drug Addiction Rehabilitation Center has built 34 facilities all over Japan since 1965.

"Its successes are what we want to share with Filipinos," Oda said.

Aside from sending self-help group meetings, program proponents will also launch educational campaigns on the dangers of illegal drug use in fifteen Manila communities.

"Drug addicts should learn how to stop and seek help," Calderon said.

The project will complement FWC's ongoing "Japanese in addict" program, which seeks financial support from well-off individuals for the rehabilitation of drug dependents.

Calderon said volunteers have expressed the hope the project would lead to long-term community efforts to rehabilitate drug dependents.

FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Philippine Permanent Representative to the United Nations Hilario Davide Jr. (right) and Filipino lawyer Antonio Oposa Jr. (left) greet Professor Edith Brown Weiss of the Georgetown University Law Center who introduced the principle of intergenerational responsibility in her book, "In Fairness to Future Generations." Davide as a justice on the Philippine Supreme Court penned the landmark case of Minors Oposa v. Factoran which upheld the right of the present and future generations to take legal action to protect their environment. Oposa had brought the legal action to stop the deforestation of the Philippines, on behalf of Filipino children and generations yet unborn. CESAR PELAYO

Right of reply bill to cover bloggers, texters–solon

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE CONTROVERSIAL RIGHT of reply bill will not only affect print and broadcast media but it could [illegible] cover bloggers, texters and even iPod users, a party-list lawmaker warned yesterday.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño said the bill's sponsor in the House, Manila Rep. Benasolo Atienza, had admitted during interpellation that House Bill No. 3305 also covers websites, e-mails, Internet social networking sites and other electronic devices in its scope.

Palatino noted that Section 1 of HB 3305 (Right of Reply) states, "All persons, natural or artificial, who are accused directly or indirectly of committing, having committed, or on the verge of having committed, any act or omission of any kind in behavior in public or private life shall have the right to reply to charges or utterances published in newspapers, magazines, [illegible] and expression?" Palatino said.

"Does this mean that whenever a criticism is published in these venues, a person can use the Right of Reply to compel a blogger or moderator of a social networking site to publish a space as a reply for that person? Or when no individual decides to copy or repost an article from a news website in his or her personal blog, and in the future the said article becomes a subject of this Right of Reply, will he or she be sanctioned or fined also?" he said.

In reply, Atienza said the bill would be debated more clearly through its implementing rules and regulations (IRR).

"Primarily, this bill refers to media publications and practitioners. I would think it will be defined more in the IRR," he said.

But Palatino said Congress should just remove the line "any electronic device" in the bill's first section. The bill is still up for amendments in the House.

"Again, this would affect more than 50 million mobile phone users and 20M owners in the country," Palatino said.

Palatino said he would oppose the right of reply bill on the grounds that it violates the freedom of the press and the public's freedom of speech and expression. He also said he was not amenable even to a "watered down" version of the bill because it merely "renders the Right of Reply pointless."

He also encouraged bloggers, netizens, texters and concerned youth to register their opposition to the "apparent railroading of this bill in Congress."

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Please look for DANNY or BERNIE or CHRIS

Protesters at Noli speech released

SEVEN ACTIVISTS arrested for staging a protest during the speech by Vice President Noli L. de Castro in Mandaluyong City were freed on Saturday after posting bail at the Mandaluyong prosecutor's office.

Roy Allen, chair of militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in the National Capital Region, told the Inquirer by phone that Iggy Rodriguez, Andrew Cat Inf., Gibe Samco, Ricky and Mark Belleza, Richie Silanga and Lorenzo Ibarli were released at around 2:30 p.m. after spending two nights at Mandaluyong Police headquarters.

Police filed charges of illegal assembly, alarm, and scandal against the seven who were part of the 60 protesters at the turnaround entrance of the Mandaluyong and Northfield Urdaneta Project of the Philippine National Railways at Shaw in Mandaluyong on Thursday.

De Castro, also the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) chair, arrived as assigned. A pair in gear a speech where the activists appeared and were rid of acting their grievances.

Video said the protesters only wanted to voice their anger at the lack of information on the displaced families.

"We are campaigning for a No Vote for Noli among the urban poor. He failed to resolve the housing problems of the poor while in HUDCC and acted as an investment vice president. How much more if he's elected president," Video said in Filipino.

Senior Supt. Elmer Antiza, Mandaluyong police chief, said he decided to arrest the protesters because they had become "unruly."

Antiza denied claims by the militant group that police officers had hurt some of the protesters. Atty. Catherine Gallejo

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, May 31, 2009
Pentecost Sunday

1st Reading: Acts 2:1-11

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. And suddenly out of the sky came a sound like a strong rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. There appeared tongues as if of fire, which parted and came to rest upon each one of them. All were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

Staying in Jerusalem were religious Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd gathered, all excited because each could hear them speaking in his own language. Full of amazement and wonder, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? How is it that we hear them in our own native language? Here are Parthians, Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes), Cretans and Arabians, we hear them proclaiming in our own language what God has done. Amen."

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13 (or Gal 5:16-25)

I tell you, then: nobody speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Accursed be Jesus," or can say, "Jesus is the Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

There is diversity of gifts, but the Spirit is the same. There is diversity of ministries, but the Lord is the same. There is diversity of works, but the same God works in all.

To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

As the body is one, having many members, and all the members, while being many, form one body, so it is with Christ.

All of us, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, have been baptized in one Spirit to form one body, and all of us have been given to drink from the one Spirit.

Gospel: Jn 15:26-27; 16:12-15 (or Jn 20:19-23)

Jesus said to his disciples: "From the Father, I will send you the Spirit of truth. When this Helper has come from the Father, he will bear witness, and you, too, will bear my witness for you have been with me from the beginning.

I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. When he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into the whole truth.

He has nothing to say of himself but he will speak of what he hears, and he will tell you of the things to come. He will take what is mine and make it known to you. In doing this, he will glorify me. All that the Father has is mine, because of this I have just told you, that the Spirit will take what is mine and make it known to you."

Commentary:

"Come, Holy Spirit!" the Church prays with great fervor. We pray that the fire of the Holy Spirit will bring him be renewed and the consecration of our hearts. We pray that the light of the Spirit might drive off people into the life of Christ and the Church. We pray that the Lord's unconditional love for sinners will bring back to the fold those who have wandered astray. We pray that the saving, driving wind of the Holy Spirit will evangelize the prevailing values of death into a culture of life.

"Come, Holy Spirit!" we pray, on this feast of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church. We pray this, like the apostles, in the midst of a world such as the Gospel tells us will never hesitate or proclaim our love for the Lord in our words and deeds, and that by the power of the Holy Spirit working within us, we might draw others closer to the Lord. Please, God, may we become the faithful stewards and the authentic evangelists that we are called to be.

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CLASS PICTURE Some of the kids dressed in their Sunday best who will step at Bahay Kalinga to be cleared for elementary school in Barangay Bayan-Bayanan in Dinalupihan, Bataan. (STORY ON PAGE A1)

Party leaders woo FVR; Palace men explain merger

From page A1

concerns," he said.

Hagedorn said he and other administration officials would definitely sit down with Ramos to address his concerns now that he is back in the country.

"Definitely I will talk to him because I consider him my godfather in politics and I have always asked advice from him," Hagedorn said.

But Ilocos Sur said that they "deeply value the opinions and advice[s]" of Ramos who has been the party's "guiding light." Claudio disagreed that the merger was done in haste saying preparations for it had begun right after the 2007 elections.

Not in haste

"This merger was not a haphazard decision. It took years of consultation and planning ... maybe there was not enough COH (complete staff work)," he said, referring to Ramos' style of management where all documents are required to go through "COH" before they land on his desk.

"This was not done in haste. It was discussed in media extensively until newspapers named Imee in the face," he said.

He also defended President Macapagal-Arroyo, presumably in the case Ramos would be by Saturday not having declared the timing of the merger as she was leaving for South Korea yesterday.

Claudio explained that the timing of the merger was dictated by political realities on the ground, explaining that they wanted to get it done before Congress goes into recess next week.

He noted that with Congress set to adjourn on June 3, affecting the merger in mid-July when Congress resumes sessions would be too late and could adversely affect the administration's chances in the 2001 elections.

House in recess

"You know how hard it is to get the congressmen together when the House is in recess. Our next opportunity would have been the time of the [President's] State of the Nation address[to be]," he said.

But if they wait until late July, Lakas-Kampi-CMD would suffer a "serious delay in its bid to consolidate a common structure to unite admists. it unites allies and chooses our national and local candidates," Claudio said.

They need to "fast-track the selection and nomination process for all levels," Claudio said.

"[The President] had nothing to do with the timing of the ratification of the merger. It was on the recommendation of the unification committee, given the deliberate to organizing a national event after Congress adjourns sine die next week," Claudio said.

Claudio said he also took Ramos' statements as more positive than negative.

Procedural lapses

"His statements were more of procedural matter than substantial lapses in the merger," he said.

He said the former President had acknowledged that there had been meetings of the Lakas directorate and executive committee where a consensus in support of the merger was arrived at since early 2000.

"While the Lakas directorate may not have been formally convened again immediately before the merger assembly last May 20, members with Lakas and Kampi components, governors and city mayors, who are the same members of the directorate or council of either party, were held to discuss the merger and the consolidation and by-laws of the merged party," said Claudio.

The members of the national unification committee that managed the merger process are all members of the executive committee of the two former parties, he said.

Claudio also maintained that he was in close contact with Ramos and had sent him periodic reports in the past two weeks that the latter had been abroad.

Ramos said he wanted to be satisfied about what would happen to the old Lakas and Kampi parties after the merger.

The former President pointed out that Lakas-CMD was accredited by the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

Before he left for United States early this month, Ramos, who chaired the drafting committee that managed the merger process, observed that CMD (for Christian Muslim Democrats) was omitted from the name of the merged party.

Renamed

CMD had "precisely" been renamed in the name of the merged party as Lakas' behest, Claudio said.

The ideological principles and mission of Lakas were also preserved for the new constitution and by-laws ratified before the signing ceremony, he said.

"The status of the erstwhile Lakas and Kampi in relation to the merged party was carefully studied by top election lawyers and will be duly classified with Comelec. If there were procedural lapses or shortcuts, we are prepared to explain them to President Estrada," he said.

Claudio said the former President's absence at the assembly last Thursday was not a form of boycott.

"Despite criticisms on FVR's [former] part, I am confident that he understands and supports the need for the merger and we look forward to his continued guidance as chairman emeritus," he said.

Divided at local level

Claudio admitted that the reason for the merger was the observation that the administration coalition was "badly divided, especially in the local level."

"The local candidates [of both parties] are practically running against fighting themselves. We sensed that this would not happen again," he explained.

Kampi executive director Reggie Amines said the merger was "the best way to reduce political violence on the local level" since the administration coalition will have common candidates.

'Bahay-bahayan' in Bayan-bayanan

From page A1

Bahay Kalinga is analogous with centers with a roof made of GI sheets and thatch. Because of their tiny frames, as many as three kids can fit on each bed in the sleeping quarters.

There are separate toilets and baths for the boys and girls. A nearby canteen sells supplies the water they need to take baths and drink.

Most of the time, the children stay at Bahay Kalinga the whole week because they are assured of three meals a day according to Elvira Pasilo, the local coordinator of the hallway house and a former barangay official.

Their meals consist of boiled rice and vegetables flavored with a little bagoong (fish paste).

Pasilo said the children have planted vegetable seedlings like okra and string beans in the backyard of the hall as seedlings at least in terms of meals.

"Bahay Kalinga exists through donations. We have to raise money to keep it going," said Sun Bumwencuss, the Bahay Club project director for the area.

Moving forward

Although the children's ages range from seven to 15, there are 13-year-olds among them who are entering first grade at the Bayan-Bayanan Elementary School.

The children of preschool age are being put in a day care center so they would acquire social skills and not be afraid of visitors, Sun Bumwencuss said.

Education is important for these people to move forward," she said.

THE WOMAN BEHIND KALINGA Evelyn Reyes-Sun Bumwencuss , Interior Design Technician made good in the big city, is an accountant who motivated her friends at the Quezon International and Rotary Club of Makati-Bonifacio to sustain the hallway home for the Aeta children.

Sun Bumwencuss observed that even among the adult Aeta, many had not attained or completed grade school level. This is why her group of volunteers is also opening classes of basic reading and writing for the adults in June.

Those classes will be held at Bahay Kalinga while the children are away in their respective school.

But even this promises to be a big struggle. The Department of Education has committed to send a teacher to functional literacy but can afford to pay this person assigned in the building's post only P2,000 a month.

Sun Bumwencuss, who also serves as auditor of Inscopinian Investors Inc. (Philippine Region), is at the point of training the some of the members of her organization to supplement their teacher's salary—and she did ours marketing latte home pay of P3,000 each.

Mass baptism

When the people from the National Census and Statistics Office recently visited the members of the Aeta community in Bayan-bayanan and Dado Bataol, it is good occasion to organize a mass baptism of babies, children and adults on May 20.

Bumwencuss got all of her friends from Quezon, Rotary and Inscopinian Clubs and the Australia Business Volunteers to attend to godmothers.

Queena Manila, president Jean Bataol etched Bataol Bahay on the day of the mass baptism. Instead of hosting a party for the birthday girl, her friends donated food to add to the Aeta feast.

The next outreach to Bayan-bayanan is on June 12. Monetary donations may be deposited to the checking account of Evelyn Sun Bumwencuss (Allied Banking Corp., Amorsolo delaCruz branch, account number 0191-00944-6). Donations in kind (clothes, school supplies, children's books and workbooks, toiletries, rice and vegetable seedlings) may be dropped off at ABF Philippines country manager Peter Arase's house at 47 Mahogany St., Dasmariñas Village East, Quezon City, or the Lozano residence at 3 Santo Cristo St., Barangay Bagumbayan, Pasig City.

Lakas-Kampi shrugs off Mar's 'Palaka' label

From page A1

"Lakas-Kampi-CMD (Christian Muslim Democrats) will leapfrog over the opposition and help our country leapfrog into the next decade with classic prospects of political stability and economic resiliency and progress."

President Arroyo had said that the merger of the two biggest political parties is the result, should "be tangible proof of the administration's resilience, unity, determination, to help ensure that the elections do push through. The emergence of Lakas-Kampi-CMD as one party is our finest weapon and perhaps our best guarantee for success in the 2010 elections."

The other day, Roxas said the new party was a union of "traditional politicians."

For his part, Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the new party would find it hard to convince voters.

Even former President Joseph Estrada jumped in, saying the merger was more of a publicity stunt since the two parties have been "under" President Macapagal-Arroyo all these years.

Opposition insecure

Claudio brushed aside the criticisms, saying the opposition was just "insecure."

Lakas spokesperson Prospero Pichay said Estrada was actually "alarmed" by the merger. "He (Estrada) himself has been calling for a merger in the opposition."

But Senate President Aquilino Pimentel and Senate Minority Leader Sagalla Osmena Jr. observed that the opposition was divided.

Lakas executive director Roy Roquero boasted yesterday in a media forum held in Quezon City that the new party is now poised to dominate the 2001 elections.

According to Roquero, the Lakas-Kampi-CMD has 146 members in Congress out of a total 230, 58 governors out of 80 governors, 65 members out of 120 city mayors, and 1,123 members out of 1,207 municipal mayors.

Kapatiran taps simple with moral duty

From page A1

n," Dolor Reyes told the reporters. "And we should not be afraid of battling trapos (traditional politicians) even if they can count on money, their machinery, or their popularity."

Dolor Reyes said he accepted the task of leading his party in the 2001 elections against "those who can wield out admit" to Kapatiran's process in choosing its presidential nominee.

"I am shocked that no one would dare ... If we want change, we have to ask ourselves 'What are we going to do about it?' In search of him (explaining, the Kapatiran party and its supporters have chosen to fight for what we believe in," he said, adding:

"I am a simple man. If it's easy for, I cannot do it. I'd rather just be a husband and father ... [But] we have an ambitious platform and program that, if implemented, could radically [heal] the ills of this country."

Member of Gordon clan

Born on Feb. 14, 1970, Dolor Reyes is the son of the late Sonny Dolor Reyes (who served as vice governor of the Province of the Lady of the Philippines for nine years) and Rudinea Gordon (an elder sister of Sen. Richard Gordon and Olongapo Mayor James Gordon Jr.).

Reyes is a member of a political clan, Dolor Reyes said. He would not public interest at the top of his priorities.

"The great evil in dynasties is the implicit agreement to work for the interests of the family, not necessarily of the community. I have no intention," Sun Star Reyes stand up and fight for your principles and convictions," he said.

A source said some members of the clan were "shocked and devastated" to learn that Dolor Reyes planned to run for president.

"They thought this may well divide the Gordon clan," said the source, who asked not to be named because of the delicate subject matter.

The source said Dolor Reyes' decision "might get in the way of Senator Gordon's ambition to become president."

"Senator Gordon and JC have not been speaking to each other for years now ideological differences. They are not close. But there is mutual respect between them, nevertheless," the source said.

Open nomination

Dolor Reyes himself declined to discuss his relationship with the senators.

According to Dolor Reyes, Kapatiran conducted an "open process" with members nominating prospective presidential candidates within or outside the party.

Among those nominated were Chief Justice Reynato Puno; 0609-CIX, which's flower Rodolfo "Boy" Lozada, General Rafael's Tony Meloto, businessman Manny Pangilinan, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo and Senators Gordon and Manuel Roxas, who all declined.

Also nominated and evaluated were the three party members who made an unsuccessful run for Senate seats in 2000—Monte Faustino, Jesse Zuasnu Paredes and Adrian Sison.

Kapatiran leaders said Dolor Reyes was selected to become the party's standard-bearer in 2010 because he represented its ideals—one who is God-loving, who places morals above pragmatic compromises, and who strives to rise above traditional politics.

Credentials

While he builds a career in local politics, raising three children with his Brazilian wife, Daisa Menezes, is "the source of so much blessings in my life for which I am grateful," Dolor Reyes said.

An alumnus of the Ateneo de Manila University and De La Salle-Zobel, Dolor Reyes obtained a degree in theology from the Pontifical University of Stockholm in Ohio in the United States, a degree in the University of the Philippines for postgraduate studies in public administration, and completed a law degree in the Soler Lasa University in Baguio City.

In recent years, he led a growing enterprise, Logistech Systems, a duty-free merchandising company.

Dolor Reyes was first elected councilor of Olongapo in 1995; he did not seek reelection in 1998.

As an incumbent councilor he has spoken against the deaths of workers in the Korean-owned shipyard in the Subic Bay freeport, the establishment of a coal-fired power plant in the free port, and the Bataan nuclear power plant, and raised such issues as workers' rights, peasant rights, and environmental protection.

He chairs the Olongapo committee on human rights and has filed a number of graft cases against certain local officials.

Challenge

During the interview, Dolor Reyes presented a novel convincing his party's core principles and ideals.

"Kapatiran candidates will work to achieve the goals outlined here. The people can guide us against these principles," he said.

The expressed the party's hope "that the youth will rise up to the challenge of our times."

He said the party was working to fill its candidate list "in all levels and in every part of the country."

Dolor Reyes conceded that Kapatiran was not as well-financed, as well-organized, as its rivals, or those of leading presidential aspirants, but said he would work to turn his perceived weaknesses into real strengths.

"People should ask not just what you have done, but what you did not do, and what you are willing to do. We say we need change, so we should all be prepared to do something other than what we have been doing for ages. This time, give a chance for the good to prevail," he said.

Dolor Reyes also hoped that "people will give Kapatiran and our candidates the chance to serve and change the government for the common good."

"Let it not be said that no one dared ... and that the Kapatiran party gave the people no choice," Dolor Reyes said.

"We know that there must be great changes made in our country. The question is, what will you, as a voter and as a citizen, do about it?" he said.

JC WHO? JC Reina Reyes, that's who. Rising an eyes on him as he goes all-out against the traditional politicians, their moves, machinery and their popularity as Kapatiran's official candidate for president.

Passing of the torch

On the phrase with the hopeless, Kapatiran founder Randy Dolores said "it's time we were given a real choice."

Dolores added: "We have to decide for ourselves what we really want. As we're getting old, the torch needs to be passed to the younger generation. I am confident that with JC in the driver's seat of our party, we will be headed in the right direction."

CHEF-MANDED DOMAIN, THE CINNAMON She's more awed by all that's not way behind is the White House than cooking cookout for world leaders, dignitaries and personalities. She's thrilled to be part of the beginning of the historic Obama era. AGENCE FRANCE

STEPS AWAY FROM STATE DINING ROOM This is where Gin sits down with the President's Nature Napoleon to talk about her life at the White House. In a kids while, the first lady herself, Michelle Obama, comes by and remains a bounty before Gin and her Filipino friends. AGENCE FRANCE

Oscar Villadolid, former journalist and ambassador; 79

FORMER AMBASSADOR TO the Vatican, late Manuel Carballo, senior vice president and news paperman Oscar Villadolid died on Friday. He was 79.

His body lies at the Christ The King Covenantarians Parish in Quezon City. The burial date will be announced soon.

Villadolid died of heart attack at 5:36 p.m. at the Makati Medical Center, according to his wife, veteran journalist Alice Coloy Villadolid.

He served as the country's ambassador to the Holy See and Malta from 1981 to 1985, and to the Asia Pacific Economic Conference from 2005 to 2006.

A graduate of the University of the Philippines (Class 1951), Villadolid was also the editor in chief of the Philippines Herald from 1971 to 1972.

When the paper was closed down upon the declaration of martial law in 1972, he advised the publishers not to reopen the Herald while "under press control." After said. The Herald never resumed publication.

Before editing the Herald, Villadolid was a reporter and columnist of the Manila Bulletin. After retiring as ambassador, he returned to journalism as columnist of Pan Asian World Service, a news wire service.

He was recognized by the Jaycees as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) Award in Journalism, an honor he received in the 1960s.

He started working for Ramon Magsaysay in 1953 and went to become the senior vice president for public affairs in 1981.

Villadolid is survived by his son, their children and in-laws: Benjamin III and Jenny Sonnobe; Oscar Jr. and Ma. Luisa Carmen; Teresa and Rafael Romeo; Joey and Myra Ferreros; Christina and Bella Pastor; Annie and Ernesto Hipe; Paolo Angeles; Hilario and Brenda Gonzalez, and Lynn and David Roy.

White House chef shares Obamas' dining secrets

From page A1

reaction about staying on as the executive chef: "It is a great honor."

The yellow-hued room was just steps away from the State Dining Room, where Cornerford's duties had been served to the world's prominent leaders. Speaking in a calm, collected manner and wearing a crisp, white chef jacket, with her name embroidered on it, she said, "This place is so awesome. To be a part of history and the beginnings of the Obama era is an awesome thing."

Best career move

Cornerford, who had to quit her food technology studies at the University of the Philippines to follow Quezon City artist she is marrying, left her family to the United States in the 1980s, started honing her culinary skills in Chicago. Heading to DC proved to be her best career move. After working as a chef in two restaurants and a short-lived stint in Panama, she was hired in 1995 by Bill Clinton executive chef Walter Scheib, as his assistant.

When Scheib quit in 2003, First Lady Laura Bush appointed Cornerford to the position. The appointment marked seven of Time Magazine's Johnson High School alumna became the first woman, the first Filipino and the first minority to head the post that hundreds of chefs had applied for.

Asked to describe her duties, Cornerford answered, "My responsibilities are to take care of the [First] Family in their daily meals from breakfast, lunch and dinner, and of course, taking care of their guests. Beyond that, we also take care of social events which could be a state event plus the daily family affairs."

She's come a long way from her paternal and maternal grandparents' homes in Gonzaga, Batangas and San Rafael, Bulacan, respectively. But these days, she feels like she's back in her grandparents' backyards. Cornerford said that's glad the First Couple decided last March to convert a patch of the South Lawn into a garden of organic fruits and vegetables. The garden, the first in the US Presidents official residence since Eleanor Roosevelt's Victory Garden during World War II, is Boris the Obama's push for eco-friendliness.

"My grandparents' home in Bulacan had a farm. They had chickens, a fishpond ... So it is almost like a homecoming, seeing this happening again, right in the South Lawn. But it also really goes to the garden and grab some vegetables," she said.

Asked about the Obama's food preferences, Cornerford replied: "Imagine yourself at home—you like simple food to begin so they are well cooked."

Most memorable

While she has cooked for the world's top leaders, dignitaries and personalities, which one does she consider most memorable?

"What's more memorable for us is what we do for the First Family ... because it is an insight that nobody else has but us," Cornerford said. "For example, it could be a dinner for just the two of them (the President and the First Lady), not a big thing. But just seeing the two of them eat is cool. For me, that is more memorable."

On having had the privilege of cooking for the Clintons, Bushes and Obamas, she said, "Different families have different likes and dislikes. Like with the Clintons, Chelsea was a little older, so whenever they prepared for daily meals was different from those of the Bushes. But generally, they are regular people. They like good, healthy food."

She elaborated: "With the Obamas, they want to utilize most of the produce from our vegetable garden. They also prefer grass-fed beef and natural-fed chicken. We are really focusing on health issues more than anything else."

Michelle Obama recently praised Cornerford's creamed spinach that contains no cream, as part of the White House's drive for healthy meals. But like his predecessors, Obama has food idiosyncrasies. He reportedly loves fresh lemon juice and has no fondness for beets. Both former Presidents Clinton and Bush had a passion for buttered meats. Clinton's love for cheeseburgers and sweets and Bush's distaste for broccoli were well-chronicled.

Snapshot to Maryland

Home for Cornerford is in Maryland, which she shares with her husband, John, and their daughter, Danielle, who is 6 years old.

Whitch is a big leap from Carlitos Street in Intramuros, Manila, where she grew up, the second youngest of 11 children. Her father, Ramon C. Ruiz, who was a public school principal in Manila, died in Chicago in 1992. Her mother, Rebecca L. Ruiz, used to own and operate a dress and seafood shop in Sampaloc.

Opel Ruiz Agulo, Cornerford's sister also lives in Chicago, wrote via e-mail that their mother inspired the girl who would grow up to become a famous chef. "The chef of the First Chef is my sister," Agulo said. "She used to hang out in the kitchen watching our mom cook our meals."

"Growing up in a big family of 11 children, there was always food cooking at home," said Cornerford, breaking into a smile. When she's not at work, this cooking for a banquet. Some my parents came from two different regions of the Philippines, we became prolific eaters. We also learned how to cook."

Asked if her sister had always been extraordinarily focused and organized, Agulo said, "Those are the qualities of a great leader, as well as a great follower. During our childhood years in Cubao, Gin was the 'head of state' in her age group. She organized and planned their activities and enjoyed doing them. She would build on those skills, using them later as an executive chef of the White House."

First Filipina

On being the first female White House executive chef, an opposite more than two hundred by groups of women chefs since females reportedly make up more than 50 percent of food service workers, but only 7 percent of 945 chefs occupy top positions, Cornerford said, "Just to be a woman chef—that is a big thing. I remember when I went to America when I worked for my cousins, one of the appointments I have opposed to me and said I was the first female chef. I'm glad she has ever met. But of course, it's not like I was the first one. I've been the likes of Julia Child and all the other women chef predecessors whom I look up to. It is a great feeling."

As for being the first Filipina and the first minority to land the position, she said, "It is a great honor bestowed on me. It is also a big responsibility. It is something that I take very seriously. I want to make sure that I want to make sure you are doing the right thing and to the best you can be."

No two days are the same when you are in charge of the meals at the No. 1 residence in the United States. "There is every single day," Cornerford declared with a laugh. "Every day is different. But you have the usual routine—prepare breakfast, then do lunch for the First Lady and then maybe later on, maybe in between. But when we have events, like the state dinner, we have to plan ahead for months in a pretty sure. The last room was turned into an awesome place. We had James Ford Jones and some artists reading poetry and playing music. The beauty of working in the White House is you look forward to what you will be experiencing and to a part of history."

Husband also cook

Cornerford and husband John are both executive chefs. She described their cooking style as Asian. "We spice the recipes a little bit more. How do I pair those together? There is nothing wrong with eating or combining leftovers—vegetables, pasta or something very straightforward. Anything that takes more than 30 minutes or more to do is a lot of work for us."

Rob easily Cornerford's daughter, Danielle, is already showing interest in the culinary art. "Last Mother's Day, when I woke up after a nap, the table was set. She did a buy-cancer meal and that's safety. She used whatever stuff we had at home. It was very cool," she said.

When she gets a craving for Filipino food, Cornerford goes to Filipino restaurants in the area. "But they are not that the authentic ones. They are more Americanized," she said. "I order stuff that my mom used to cook like lumpia and barbecue. There are pretty much our two favorites."

Why she loves her job

Asked what advice she would give to aspiring chefs, Cornerford said, "Take responsibility seriously. Anything that is given to you is a chance to do something really good. It could be the most menial task—like chopping onions—but you can do anything with it. And you do it from the heart, it's going to show in whatever you do and whatever you cook."

She shared her plans for the day when she hangs up her professional toque and apron for good. "My husband and I want to put up a bed and breakfast," Cornerford said. "I would also like to help the underprivileged kids in the community. In Europe, kids with chef aspirations start learning how to cook at 14. Maybe I could help underprivileged kids and learn how to cook. Nothing. We'll see what happens."

But those days, she insisted, imagine doing anything else. "I really love what I am doing right now," she said.

After the interviews, she gave the Inquirer a personal tour of the White House. As one poster-dazing for true, Michelle Obama turned at Cornerford and her visitors.

What's not to love about her job?

Pampanga is backdrop for Cannes' best director

From page A1

Mendoza has for four of his eight movies in Pampanga which, until the devastating arrival of Typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana) in 2009, wiped out some of the country's most fertile plains, was a prime producer of sugar and rice.

Social realist

But unlike the social realist filmmakers of previous generations who named Pampanga's history of agriculture central to the conflict of peasants with army rebellion, Mendoza has his stories urban and contemporary concerns.

In "Masahista" (Manong) by Bernard Pampanga's gayest (funniest) festival, held on Christmas Eve and featuring a parade of giant lanterns in kaleidoscopic designs.

"Serbis" (Service Hotel) and "Manoro" (Area Broker) treat a very lesser part of Pampanga's interior where the province was devastated physically and economically by the Pinatubo eruption and the resulting volcanic ash clinker. The former uses the labor-ravaged towns for a backdrop, while the latter contrasts lush rainforest hills like the barrio landscape.

"Serbis" is set in Angeles City, the town that hosted the US Clark air base whose presence spawned a thriving hospitality industry of countless bars and nightclubs and restaurants and the scandal of prostitution. The story revolves around a family that lives and operates a seedown porn theater in the declining base town and, according to the director, symbolizes "the dysfunctional family."

Quaint scenery

"Foreigners found the local scenery quaint. They also thought that the church backed in labor was dramatic," says Mendoza.

But more than the landscape, Mendoza is keen to show off Pampanga's rich and distinctive culture.

"I'm proud that I get to show the richness of Kapampangan culture to the whole world," he says.

He says foreign audiences also get acquainted with the Kapampangan language through his films. The four films set in Pampanga exclusively used Kapampangan dialogue.

Mendoza's use of Pampanga as a setting for his films is part of his "crusade to promote Kapampangan culture through film," said Roldy Tuvilgan, executive director of the Holy Angel University's Center for Kapampangan Studies, which co-produced "Manoro."

Shoestring budget

His use of the Pampanga setting, crowd and characters begins with "Masahista," says Tuvilgan. The film was shot in digital format on a shoestring budget in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga and Manila. It used Kapampangan-speaking actors Archie Incardona and Coco Martin.

The film won the Golden Leopard in the video competition of the 2005 Locarno International Film Festival, said to be the fourth biggest film festival in the world.

"Masahista" also won the Audience Award and Interfaith Award in the Busan and Brisbane film festivals in 2006.

"Serbis" was recently shot in the town of Guagua, and with the story of how a Kapampangan family survives 20 years after the Pinatubo eruption.

It won the Dignos Award in the 2007 Jeonju International Film Festival. Its lead actress, Cherry Pie Picache, won best actress award in the 2007 Brisbane International Film Festival in south Africa.

All-Asia cast

"Manoro," which is cast entirely with Asia from Pampanga River, Angeles City, tells of the struggle of an Asia woman who reached the people from her village how to read and write to protect the tribe from electoral fraud and deception.

It won the best film award in the 2008 Gawad-ala International Film Festival, earning also for Mendoza the best director award in the digital local competition section. It also took the Gawad-ala Award in the 2008 Yokohama International Film Festival.

"Serbis" (Service) won a joint production of the Philippines and France's Swift Productions, with funding for the script from the Asian Cinema Fund of the 2007 Pusan International Film Festival.

In 2008, the City of San Fernando bestowed on Mendoza the Ten Outstanding Fernandinos Award.

On Friday night, he received a special recognition from his provincemates for winning the Best Director Prize at the 62nd Cannes Film Festival last Saturday for "Kinatay."

World-class artistry

Pampanga boy Eddie Pamilio said Mendoza's rise to Cannes was "proof of Kapampangan artistry and ingenuity that is world-class."

"We salute Mr. Mendoza and we wish to thank him for serving as an inspiration to our people, especially our youth," he said.

After viewing search and secular shrine, Mendoza Asia hoped that his work is now being recognized by "the mainstream."

Citation from Mandaluyong

Tomorrow, he will receive a special citation from the municipal government of Mandaluyong, which named him one of the Most Outstanding Mandaluyenos this year.

"The people of Pampanga, along with the people of Mandaluyong where I now live, have always been the first to honor me," he says.

"I am very happy for these awards, too."

Tuvilgan later also presented to Inquirer.

The honors to settle the issue on between us him," says Mendoza's Pepot Gallego.

Filmmaker and provincemate Rhoel Brion, who presented to him the Most Outstanding Batangueno award last month, also says: "He has reached the pinnacle."

MAKATIMED TURNS 40

Pagaling ng Pagaling

On the occasion of its 40th anniversary, the Makati Medical Center (MMC) embraces the theme of "Pagaling ng Pagaling". Apparently a pun on the state of proprietors wellness, things are indeed quiting so much better over this side of Makati.

It was in the '70s when Makati Medical Center made a name for itself as the country's premier medical institution. Now 40 years later, various other industry players have come to the fore and are challenging the leader. Unfazed, MakatiMed, as the hospital is fondly called, rises to this challenge with great excitement and expectations.

At the helm of this medical landmark is its current president, Rose Montenegro, whose formidable background in the telecoms, banking and consumer industries makes her perfectly suited for the job. While not a doctor herself, Montenegro is no stranger to the medical field. She comes from a family of medical practitioners —her mother being a surgical nurse, her uncles and aunts all doctors and nurses. She is more "medically attuned than the average consumer" and can carry on a discussion about laparoscopic surgery without batting an eyelash. Montenegro insists: "I think I have a higher understanding of the medical industry than most. And I've been in the MakatiMed all the time since this is my hospital; my kids were born here, my pediatrician is Dr. Coldiao. I've been here all the time."

Rose MakatiMed president Rose Montenegro is focusing on bringing the hospital back on top.

MakatiMed's state-of-the-art New Annex Building underlines the institution's commitment to better addressing current medical challenges and its legacy of providing top-of-the-line healthcare services.

Montenegro considers her work at MakatiMed as an apprentice of sorts. Having retired from PLDT and resigned down her career, she believes she can do something for a hospital that she had an affinity for. "Through the years, I have seen MakatiMed. I would like to bring it back to what it used to be."

Her fresh pair of eyes envisions a renaissance. "I've focused more on what I need to do to bring MakatiMed to its former position of prominence. [Before] when you thought of health care, the top of mind was MakatiMed. I don't think we've lost our appeal. The brand name still has very high recall. But we've given up a lot of market share and a lot of market leadership. When once upon a time, I think it was to the '70s, if you said hospital, it was MakatiMed right away. Today, there are other players."

Montenegro recognizes that to be competitive in today's environment, there needs to be an understanding of the changing trends in hospital care. She came up with an article she read which said that a hospital is no longer a "warehouse for the sick". Rather, it is a place to get well. It should provide an atmosphere where patients' spirits can be lifted, especially since there are studies that indicate how emotional and spiritual factors can help speed up the healing process.

She also believes that the basic patient expectations are for things to work and processes applied for their convenience. Facilities and equipment need not be brand new nor five-star hotel-sized, but there have to work. Montenegro expounds: "Everything should be working well; everything should contribute to that patient experience or encounter where they don't get hassled until they get to the doctor. And even the doctors, they should respect patients' time because their time is as valuable. The patient is already sick and they're made to wait so long. They're already sick and they're also filling from one place to another because parties from one are considered in the planning of the building allocation. So I think there are many facets in the consumer world that can be applied in hospital administration; so I'd like to do that."

"I would like to buy good equipment too. I understand before I came, that the hospital already invested a significant amount of money in equipment. If you look at the operating room downstairs, it's very advanced. We're complying with what they call Joint Commission International Accreditation standards for hospitals. JCI is supposed to be the seal of approval for hospitals. So I'd like to invest in medical equipment and technology, but not for its sake. Because I noticed, some of our competitors are bragging about what they've purchased. I'd rather brag about the excellent doctors we have here who are enabled with the latest in medical technology for diagnostics and healing, rather than the equipment. (Equipment) seems to be the centerpiece, but for me the centerpiece is still the professional. It's still the doctor, and there are tools to make him practice his vocation and his craft better. But it's not an end in itself."

At the same time, Montenegro wants to make sure that the operational support is in place. She continues: "For example, if getting a room is a painful experience, if getting admitted is difficult, if getting my bill corrected in a timely fashion is difficult, then I have to make sure that the operational efficiency on the professional non-medical side are equally good. They're so inextricably linked. I cannot say I have great doctors but everything else is mediocre. It's got to be a symbiotic relationship, with the patient feeling that he is the center of interest."

Perhaps this dedication and passion comes from her educational foundations at the St. Theresa's College, where "the nuns were so good at inculcating that almost obsessive-compulsive behavior that calls for excellence, where everything has to be done well." She candidly says that the words echoing in her ears "If you're going to do a job, do it well!" It is with this same spirit that she is trying to infuse her workplace, shaking them from their roots, albeit through wit and humor.

And so Rose Montenegro works 12 hours a day, or about 60 to 70 hours a week, including weekends. It's a good thing she lives close to the hospital, which compels her to visit the office even on Sundays. "I like working on Saturday afternoon because no one's interrupting. And it also gives me a chance to look at the hospital at different hours of the day. Normally on Sunday, I'm already ahead for my Monday work. But on Wednesday, I'm behind again because everything has piled up. Work overtakes me. And normally I work very fast. This is the first time I can say to my career when I am really feeling that the corners are coming as fast as I'm working. And I work fast."

With her work cut out for her, Montenegro's ultimate goal is to offer that efficient, effective clinical service to MakatiMed patients. And she is "looking forward to the day when the patients get that kind of healthcare service without having to call up someone they know within MakatiMed." At the rate she's going, that can become a reality faster than anyone can cry "Doctor!"

Congratulatory Messages on MAKATIMED'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

I convey my warmest greetings to the officials and staff of the Makati Medical Center on the celebrations of their 40th anniversary of continuously serving the community through quality and uncompromising health care.

May this year's celebrations be the inspiration for continuously working towards raising the standards in hospital care service in the pursuit of quality and excellence.

Let us strengthen our efforts and renew our commitment to bring the best tertiary medical facility in Makati.

Congratulations and mabuhay kayong lahat!

DR. FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, M.D., M.Sc.
Secretary, Department of Health

It is my pleasure to convey my wholehearted congratulations to the shareholders, management, medical teams, and support personnel of the Makati Medical Center on the occasion of its Ruby Anniversary.

Today, 40 years after it was established, the Makati Medical Center stands proudly on a sterling track record of excellent health care delivery characterized by a culture of highly professional yet compassionate service.

The City of Makati takes pride in having this JCI-accredited medical facility as the centerpiece of our ongoing campaign to put the Philippines on the global map of health and wellness tourism. I laud the MMC management for your sincere commitment in keeping to its thrive and services on a par with world-class standards, which you have demonstrated through the substantial investments you have made in its continual expansion and modernization.

With the MMC as our major partner, we in the city government are more confident and inspired to take the lead in promoting the country as Asia's medical tourism hub. Together, let us help forge strong, dynamic ties with local and international industry players, that our nation may have a better chance at surpassing the current financial crisis by capturing a major slice of this billion-dollar industry.

Again, congratulations to all of you. Mabuhay kayong lahat!

HON. JEJOMAR C. BINAY
Mayor, Makati City

Our journey to the Ruby Year Anniversary is one marked by trials and by successes — milestones which make Makati Medical Center a landmark in Philippine healthcare history.

Whether we have encountered both triumphs and challenges in that journey, we keep in mind that those experiences prove our mettle as an institution of service to God, people, and country. Anchored on our core values of professionalism, integrity, accountability, and compassion, I hope we continue to be passionate in our pursuit of excellence.

Today, we feel the significance of our 40 years of experience and expertise, compassion and commitment to our patients and the public we serve. May we always remember our privileged position and continue to strive towards making Makati Medical Center better than ever.

It is with gratitude and pride that I salute you — our dear doctors and nurses, our professional and allied staff, all management and employees – all of who have shaped Makati Medical Center.

My congratulations!

MARIBEL V. PANGILINAN
Chairman, Makati Medical Center

Makati Medical Center was established 40 years ago by a select group of this country's renowned experts in their highly specialized fields of medicine and surgery whose vision was provide world-class health care and facilities to Filipinos by Filipinos. A wonderful collective dream of a few transformed into a long tradition of service and excellence. We, to whom the torch was passed, carry on this legacy to honor our Founding Fathers.

The annals of our hospital's history show us the significant events that have made MakatiMed the preeminent choice for health care in the country. It is with pride and celebration that we recall these shining moments as we mark our 40th year in service.

Through the years, we have taken the initiative to venture at the forefront of medicine — not only through the rigid and continuous training in skills and practice in traditional as well as novel disciplines and specialties in medicine. We have continuously invested in cutting-edge technology and facilities improvement. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to widen the range of our service in diagnostic, treatment and specialty centers with the opening of our new building.

As we are linked to the memory of those who dedicated their lifetime professional careers in the stewardship of MakatiMed, we honor them with an undiminished effort towards greater

BENJAMIN N. ALIMURUNG, M.D.
Medical Director, Makati Medical Center

MAKATIMED MILESTONES
From the Archives

1969
Makati Medical Center opens its doors to the public

1970
Launches its indigent and own charity program

1973
Cancer Research Foundation of MakatiMed is launched

1973
Introduces first ultrasound and respiratory therapy units and immunopathology section

1978
Opens the Computed Tomography Center

1986
Construction begins for the Department of Emergency Medicine facility, the first of its kind in the country

1988
Expansion continues with installation of Optimus M-200 and School of Nursing

1989
Makati Heart Foundation is established, inauguration of Nuclear Medicine Department

1994
MMC gains recognition for conducting first heart transplant in the Philippines

1994
Renders services to former U.S. president Bill Clinton during his visit to Manila

1995
MakatiMed performs historic procedure, the first successful attempt to surgically separate conjoined twins

1998
Adds new building housing additional private rooms with a helipad

1996-1998
Opens Hearing and Dizziness and Diabetes Educational Clinics; launches 3-phased cardiac rehab program

2007
Holds groundbreaking ceremony of the New Annex Building

2007
Launches Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, Aesthetic Surgery Center, Home Care & Hospice Services Unit

2007
Opens Dermatopathology Unit, the first of its kind in Southeast Asia

2008
Holds blessing of 12-storey New Annex Building

2009
MakatiMed holds inauguration of state-of-the-art New Annex Building

Enrique Zobel asks Dr. Constantino P. Manahan and Dr. Jose V. Fonso to form the core group of Makati Medical Center.

MAKATIMED CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
Where Compassion meets Experience

The Makati Medical Center continuously endeavors to live up to its heritage of compassionate and expert healthcare. As requirements for medical services become increasingly demanding, the hospital has risen to the challenge with the establishment of its Centers of Excellence.

Run by teams of highly skilled professionals who undergo continuous training, certification and education, MakatiMed's Centers of Excellence are committed to innovation in medical prevention and advancement in quality care. Designed to address the multi-disciplinary care needs of patients, these Centers promote seamless provision of diagnosis and treatment in all aspects of a patient's health.

AESTHETIC CENTER

The Makati Medical Center recognizes that cosmetic procedures provide results that are more than skin deep. The hospital understands the value of these procedures as "surgeries of the psyche" that can help individuals overcome a long-existing negative outlook as even help facilitate a change in one's life. Staffed by some of the country's top cosmetic and plastic surgeons, dermatologists and dentists, MMC brings together 3 aesthetic specialties under one center offering the complete line-up of cosmetic surgery procedures.

The MCT Dental-Jaw & Physiotherapy Unit offers an array of laser and light treatments including, among others, skin lifting, thinning, reverse resurfacing, hair photodynamic therapy, hair removal, psoriasis and acne treatment. Under the Aesthetic Dentistry provides a multi-specialty approach to treatment of dental concerns via a team of experienced dental professionals that balance cosmetic concerns with overall oral health.

CANCER CENTER

The MakatiMed Cancer Center provides compassionate cancer care with its holistic approach to cancer treatment. Housing the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, the Chemotherapy Clinic and Radiation Oncology Unit, the Center is run by a team of specialists from various medical disciplines and equipped with the latest facilities.

The Center also allows patients the chance to connect with MakatiMed's growing community of cancer survivors and their caregivers. Patients will be able to learn from their experiences and even contribute their own opinions and stories to help the scientific community, at MakatiMed and elsewhere, find a cure for cancer.

HEART AND WELLNESS CENTERS

The MakatiMed Health and Wellness Centers provide different program packages for patients of all ages, including diagnostic procedures, curative and preventive care. The Executive Health programs are comprehensive diagnostic evaluation procedures for a broad range of patients needs, at any age. The Corporate Health and Wellness delivers medical services and programs for employees, working professionals and their qualified dependents.

OPTIMAL AGING CENTER

Successful aging is the goal of the Optimal Aging Center. A diverse team takes a multi-disciplinary approach to aging that covers specialties to and deals holistically with aging-related conditions, including the treatment of cardiovascular disease, cancer, arthritis, cataract, osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes, hypertension and Alzheimer's disease.

At the same time, the Center is also envisioned to go beyond the treatment of diseases to promote the overall well-being of senior citizens. Services include geriatric outpatient consultations, in- outpatient and inpatient geriatric executive check-up/package, an elderly care program, and an adult activity center.

UROGYNECOLOGY AND INCONTINENCE CENTER

The Urogynecology and Incontinence Center provides diagnosis and treatment for urinary and pelvic dysfunctions in men and women who suffer from conditions such as urinary incontinence, overactive bladder, recurrent urinary tract infections, voiding dysfunction, pelvic organ prolapse, prostate problems and other urinary symptoms.

The Center also provides minimally invasive treatments like Transobturator tape, Transvaginal tape, open mesh, Laparoscopic mesh, Transurethral injection of proteus, Transurethral incision of prostate, Open Prostatectomy and other prolapse surgeries.

ISSN 0116-2042 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Vol. 29 No. 272

OPINION

Freedom to find out

EDITORIAL

IT HAS BEEN OVER 20 YEARS SINCE THE RIGHT TO information was enshrined in our Constitution. The Bill of Rights, specifically Article III, Sec. 7 states: "The right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access to official records, and to documents and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to limitations as may be provided by law."

Also, Sec. 28 of Article II (Declaration of Principles and State Policies) of our Constitution provides: "Subject to reasonable conditions prescribed by law, the State adopts and implements a policy of full public disclosure of all its transactions involving public interest."

But up to now, a law has yet to be enacted to put teeth into these constitutional injunctions. The House of Representatives has approved a Freedom of Information bill, but the Senate's Committee on Public Information is still going through the process of passing a counterpart bill.

A coalition of civic groups and NGOs, called the Access to Information Network (AIN), has been lobbying long and hard for this bill to be passed. Unlike the dangerous Right of Reply bill of the Senate (now being molded by the House), this is one law the country needs very badly—if our ongoing democratic project is to move forward and not backward.

Over the past few years, we have seen how controversy after controversy has erupted over government contracts and loans; and over may, because inordinate, relationships between officials and contractors for public works and other projects. Almost always in all these instances, the concerned government agencies—e.g., the Department of Public Works and Highways and the Department of Transportation and Communications; the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs; the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police, all within the ambit of the Office of the President of the Philippines—ended up trying to stamp out the controversy.

When a controversy arises, both the political class and the media—and the public, too—clamor for information, either to prove or disprove the allegations of wrongdoing. In response, more often than not, officialdom in the affected agencies would refuse to disclose data, documents or other information on the pretext that it would violate national security, or that the data are not available or too complex to disclose, or that there is no one to authorize the disclosure. Not to mention the catch-all excuse of "executive privilege."

The proposed Freedom of Information Act, as AIN describes it, would promote disclosure because:

1. It is expansive in scope. It covers all possible government agencies, whether they're in executive, legislative or judicial branches, or independent constitutional bodies. And it covers all information regardless of the form or format in which they are stored.

2. It provides only a narrow list of clearly defined and reasonable exceptions.

3. It provides an opportunity and a right enabling citizens to override an exception whenever public interest in the disclosure of information is greater.

4. It provides a clear, uniform and speedy procedure for public access to information.

5. It provides the mechanism for compulsory disclosure by government agencies of information on government transactions.

6. It provides adequate and accessible remedies in cases where access to information is denied.

7. It provides clear criminal liabilities for violation of the right to information.

8. It spells out numerous mechanisms for the active promotion of openness in government.

Simply put, transparency should be the policy of government, and exceptions to this general rule should be difficult to insure. Which is not to say that the proposed law would be unreasonable or unmindful to the security and stability of the state. After all, even proponents of the Freedom of Information bill acknowledge that official disclosure should be tempered if it would bring on or heighten the risk of war, or threaten an ongoing diplomatic negotiation, or hamper ongoing military or police operations.

But it must be government, and not the citizenry, that should bear the burden of proof in arguing for withholding information.

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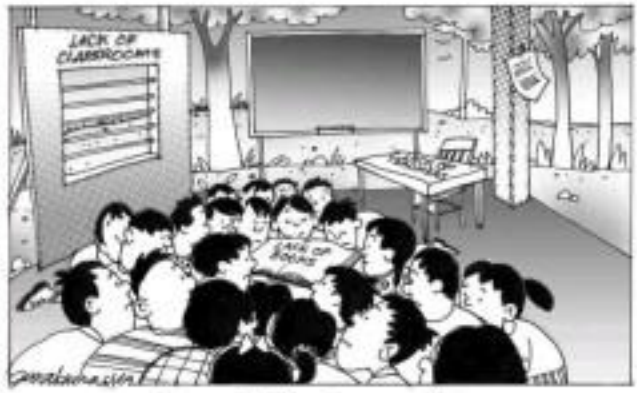

A beautiful but lost tradition

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

THIS LAST DAY OF THE HEBREW MONTH OF May I recall one of the most beautiful traditions of our country that is now practically dead, or moribund, at least in the more sophisticated areas of Metro Manila. I refer to the Santa Cruz de Mayo procession that used to grace the numerous nights of that month when the people raised vesper with reverence to homage to the Virgin Mary. As a young man then, I would add romance to the festivities.

The processions were staged for nine nights, as in a prayerful novena. They were directed by the old ladies of the town, with the humbled and most important one being assigned to the hermana mayor, usually the wealthiest member of the group or the wife of an important governmental official of the place. In her choice role, she had the last word on everything about the celebration, with the panels prized to loyal concurrence.

Her most important decision was in the choice of the angelus, or the participants in the procession depicting Biblical characters like the Emperatriz, the Reyna Elena and her retinue of court ladies, the Reyna Banda and her rebels, the tiniest queens, and first base theirles, who must have been wondering why he was there. The human soldiers were also present, forbidding in their cardboard armor and helmet.

It was important to civic pride that the choice of the beautiful angelus, especially the Reyna Elena, was confined to the belles of the village and not imported from some distant region. Properly fashioned, that major character was unquestionably the most beautiful girl to reign over the procession. As if there is no beauty, a hand was sent to fetch her from her house and brought to the hermana mayor's residence in state, in sophisticated, for the cost of the festivities.

To preserve the religious nature of the procession, the narrow cause is that they led the procession, singing the old hymns to the Virgin Mary and praying the rosary. The little children obediently followed them and sang their garbled songs of "Inang Mariit, Maria de Mata... Jesusmio! Jesus mio! Santa Maria, nuestra madre, amen, Jesus." They didn't know what they were singing, but they sang it with enough vigor and sincerity to arouse the saints.

The procession meandered through the principal streets of the town, with the imbeciles in extreme appreciation, until it finally returned to the hermana mayor's house where the participants were welcomed with the traditional native dinner. The angelus were presented with exotic fare while the other guests were served merienda, as expected, the simple Pinoy fare. They had to prevent their spare candles as a part of their participation in the procession. The girls were given kutkutanda and the boys had the right to engage in the pabitin.

There was a trifle packed with goodies high up in the air that upon signal was removed in the moaning boys who jumped for the grab. except, not necessarily for them but because of the thrill of joyful competition. Even those who did not win any of the hanging gifts were satisfied that they joined in the friendly contest because everything was good at those fun in keeping with the spirit of the night.

As I grew up into a teenager, my attention began to be exclusively focused on the fairest. It required that I kill to love with and decided every night to marry. That decision changed every other night. Fortunately, I was just dreaming the many other love-struck cousins smitten by their intended brides, many of whom are now dead or weigh 10 tons. Like all foolish dreams, they did not last. The time came when the Sta. Cruz de Mayo procession itself lost its old magic for me as a new sophisticated young man concerned with more mundane things.

Sometime during the forties, an association called the Balatong to Barkadas, Intramuros, Manila, organized a Sta. Cruz de Mayo procession with much fanfare intended to entertain at the same time the exiles of Bryan Ilhom and other members of the tenderloin district. Audaciously, of course. The audience was originally amused by the novelty of the ridiculous change but was soon outraged by the mockery of an honored immortal tradition and the impious disrespect for the Virgin Mary herself.

The latest organizers of the Sta. Cruz de Mayo procession, less religious than their predecessors, decided to import their angelus, reputedly from the movie stars, who regaled the audience with their expensive finery and not the old time simplicity of the village belles. Even more sinful, as reported, the simple Pinoy de Mayo ritual became a Pinoy de Mayo celebration, an exclusively social presentation by the elite where the emphasis was on the display of expensive jewelry, imported frocks, and extravagant "entrances" of the contestants.

The final touch was reached when shortly before the rest, the Sta. Cruz de Mayo procession was marred by the offense known as "stealing," where a set number would suddenly attack an attractive woman, double her breast, and as typically escape apprehension and pursuit. The "stealing" was especially directed against the angelus in the Sta. Cruz de Mayo procession, many of whom decided not to join the human harassment fruitlessly anymore and left eventually declined.

I regret the loss of the original Sta. Cruz de Mayo procession. It was one of the beautiful traditions that made the past more graceful.

Alternative power

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A DOUBT WHO was given a tablet for his illness. Before he took the tablet, he wanted reading the sides of the tablet. When asked why he replied, "To read side effects."

* * *

In today's Gospel (Jn. 20, 19-23) we hear of the Risen Lord breathing the Holy Spirit on the disciples: "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." It was most important, but, the "side effects" of the Resurrection and the Ascension is Pentecost, the Descent of the Holy Spirit, which we celebrate today.

* * *

One of the first "side effects" and sins of the fruits of living a life in the Spirit is peace. Are you living a peaceful life? Is there peace in your heart, in your relationships, in your work, and in your life as a whole? The presence or absence of peace in our lives depends on the presence or absence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

* * *

Sin is a stress in our human condition. We are all sinners. But we all have a choice—to remain in sin and be bound to the flesh; or to seek forgiveness and conversion, and live a peaceful life in the Holy Spirit. Yes, we have access to peace. We had two effects (gifts) of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation and Holy Orders. If not, altogether reject the "tablet" and its "side effects."

* * *

The Holy Spirit is present and available all along but, for whatever reason, we do not recognize, acknowledge or avail ourselves of His presence and power in our lives. This reminds me of one soldiers, who for six months was unaware of the availability of hot shower in his room in our seminary in Baguio. Every morning he put up a heavy fresh for the day with a cold shower. Until one day, he saw a knob. Out of curiosity he turned it on, and to his delight, warm water started to flow. "Meadow ang pala (it was just there all along)," he said.

Many, party machinery, and even "dirty tricks departments," are now being put in place in preparation for the 2010 elections. May we not find out too late that, too focused on our worldly battles, ambitions and strategies, we have missed the presence and the available refreshing power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

* * *

"Come Holy Spirit!" this phrase, said prayerfully and continuously in a very powerful prayer, but it when "corrupted" for a mercenary. Say it when confused or stressed. Say it when troubled or burdened. Say it when dejected or rejected. Just make the opening, and you'll be amazed of the power and strength that will unfold, beyond your imagining. Leonard Cohen, relying on your own power and on worldly power. Start trusting in and listening to God. Instead, sing/playing God. Let God be God, let man be man.

* * *

Manong Anton from our farm in Western Pangasinan never went to school—he regrets now because I gave him a solar powered cell phone charger. For two weeks now, in the absence of electricity due to the damage caused by the recent typhoon "Emong," he had to walk a kilometer every two days to have his cell phone charged by means of a generator set. Every two days. With both the prospect and the reality of an alternative source of energy in his hands, his face greeted with a smile. In life too, we have an alternative power within our reach and in our hands, the Holy Spirit!

* * *

Money, party machinery, and even "dirty tricks departments," are now being put in place in preparation for the 2010 elections. In the face of the formidable resources that will be used to lure, manipulate and allegedly disregard the true will of our people, let us not forget that we have people power, prayer power, and Holy Spirit power. Let us not lose hope. Let us not cower nor Cod on our lives. Let us believe that there is such a thing as an "act of God." Miracles still do happen. God himself is the God of surprises, still.

* * *

Today May 31 is the feast of the Visitation of Mary. It is also the last day of our Flores de Mayo celebrations. Mama Mary was there in the upper room when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. Mama Mary teaches us to rely and to trust in the power of the Holy Spirit in all moments of our lives. Like Mary, may we be guided, strengthened and led by the Spirit.

* * *

PHILIPPINE SVD CONTINUAL MOMENT: Early on, our SVD missionaries had tapped alternative power to help improve the standard of life of our people. To name some: Bro. Alois Grollenberg, an SVD from Austria who set up a dam for the irrigation of rice fields in Abra, and a hydroelectric station to supply electricity; Fr. Eugene Reinhart, an SVD from Switzerland who is responsible for setting up the irrigation systems in the lowlands of Abra; Fr. Pio Engesser, an SVD from Bulacan who has helped empower farmers by teaching them new ways of seed production and rice planting and by coming out with the "Engesser" sprayer; and Fr. Ludwig Meyer who has built dams and bridges in Mindoro and Romblon; St. Bernard Kowalkowski and St. Ary Hoeve who helped find water for the people of Mindoro.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, help me to not disregard an alternative power, the power of the Holy Spirit, in my life. Amen.

No-proc nightmares

WITH DUE RESPECT

Antonio V. Pangalangan

SOMETIME AGO, COMELEC CHAIR JOSE A. R. Melo confessed his nightmare of a failure of elections due to possible automation glitches and "sabotage." With the Lahar-Exempt now merged, Ebdu Manguindal-Arroyo assures that elections in 2010 will take place. But Melo's horror is not just "no-el." It is also "no-pres," that is, no one is proclaimed winner.

President PIE agrees! His nightmare proved to be outrageous. It led many readers to ask: If, for whatever reason, no winner is proclaimed during the 2010 presidential polls, who will run the country?

Sec. 7, Art. VII of our Constitution gives the definitive answer: "When no President and Vice President shall have been chosen or shall have qualified, or when both shall have died, or become permanently disabled, the President of the Senate or, in case of his inability, the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall act as President until a President or a Vice President shall have been chosen and qualified."

Theoretically then, the presidential order of succession is limited to the vice president, the Senate president and the House Speaker. Bonette, the present mobile student, Attorney Gilbert Remulla and Speaker Prospero Nograles are, like President Macapagal-Arroyo, ending their terms of office on June 30, 2010. Who then shall act as president on July 1, 2010 onward?

President PIE says "none think that Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno, being the fifth highest official of our country, should take over. However, there is no law authorizing him to do so. In fact, lawyer de conquerdo Antonio Macalintal argues that a statute naming the Chief Justice as acting president would be unconstitutional because the Charter (Art. VII, sec. VIII) prohibits Supreme Court justices from being "designated in any agency performing quasi-judicial or administrative functions."

Moreover, I think that, even granting such law to be constitutional, it is inadvisable to quiz the readers' nightmares because CJ Puno will exit on May 17, 2010 when he reaches the compulsory retirement age of 70 years. Can his successor become acting president?

Unfortunately for Sec. 15 of sec. 10 of the Constitution bans Presidents-Arroyo from appointing Puno's successor. It states that "[w]ithin ninety days immediately before the next presidential elections up to the end of his term, a President or Acting President shall not make appointments, except temporary appointments to executive positions when continuous vacancies will prejudice public service or endanger public safety."

To repeat, the Constitution prohibits President-Arroyo from making appointments within a period lasting from two months prior to the election up to the end of her term. Thus period falls on March 10, June 30, 2010 which coincidentally is Election Day. The exception allowing GMA to exercise her appointing power during the prohibited period refers only to temporary ones in the face of urgent imperatives, not to permanent appointments in the Judicial Department like the post of the chief justice.

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President PIE says "none" Should this no-proc scenario happen, President Arroyo may want to staying as president based on the hold-over doctrine (*see* Sections 10 Comelec April 16, 2003) that incumbent officials shall continue to discharge the functions of their office until their successors shall have been chosen and qualified.

In fact, Macalintal suggests that Congress should pass a law to authorize expressly the "incumbent elected president to act as president until the duly elected president or vice president is proclaimed or qualified." But that precisely is causing nightmares to many people, the eternal whitney of 2004.

The better solution, I believe, is to be absolutely sure that the automation of our 2010 election succeeds. If, for any reason, full automation is not possible or full automation fails, Comelec should indeed have alternative plans, including a quick shift to manual elections. Otherwise, the country could face a constitutional crisis of unprecedented proportions that could result in radicalized chaos.

No-proc could open the country to civil strife, military adventurism, revolving juntas, emergency rule, martial law hold over by President-Arroyo, people power or even the "communist solution" by order of Fr. Joe Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

President PIE" no lang! On the other hand, the nightmare could awaken us to a fresh morning after that will call for non-traditional political ideas like business whiz Manuel V. Pangilinan or Comelec hero-equip Jaime Jabasin. Who could have thought that those heroes during those balmy days in February 1986 would topple a corky and well entrenched dictator, and catapult a reluctant and politically inexperienced housewife to the presidency?

Comelec no-proc has its one reason why GMA's allies have given up on Charter change (Cha-cha)? Months ago, Speaker Nograles gave himself until the adjournment of Congress to effect Cha-cha. Well, Congress will adjourn on June 5 but I do not see his proposed parting the required three-fourths vote in the House and, separately, in the Senate.

Two weeks ago, Sen. Lan Villafuerte, the most ardent promoter of a bicam-bac constituent assembly (con-ass), already assumed. Cha-cha's demise, further, on April 15 column because the derailment of the Cha-cha express unless Congress simply turns itself into a constituent assembly. Until the Palace did not, and the train is stuck up on its rails.

Should our people now brace for no-pres?

* * *

Comments are welcome at *thefact@pdjournal.com*

The morality of Sen. Bong Revilla

ACTOR RAMON "BONG" REVILLA JR.—STAR of "RAM Pogi" (1990) "Kung Pogi Ay Walang Gold" (1991) and "Kung Pogi The Movie" (1999)—has a penchant for roles that demand bandanas, screaming bull-naked females and paint by number dialogue. The latest movie in which the plastic PD 4 can take on a gang of mismatched and bearded hunks—beards, not animals, by virtue of the mustaches—all while heroically rescuing fr the pal studio the rushed to Tokyo. "This is the most arduous [illegible] we have ever been in for role as Lenin in the 2388 film "Ang Kiukiok sa ang Sentro" has three women among his co-stars. Ang Ning Ning Cruz, Ang Ning Ning Reyes and Ang Ning Ning Santos. Each of pretending loyalty to each of them, while all the while attempting to get a virgin into bed. And as the women strive to lay brothers in vow, all of whom launch themselves at the man with a hand on another woman's behind. And then the action starts, elbows to gut, the to face, a knee to the groin, the whirling Cuisinart-style kicks to the head. The rain of blood ing at this—and no doubt the women, all busy trying to squirm their half-naked selves into his arms while soon with his eyes. Another day in the life of a real man.

METHOD TO MADNESS

Patricia Evangelista

This is Bong Revilla, whose contribution to culture is in large part the image of the Filipino macho man as a country where Filipinos and otherwise the public. Its most accessible art of social standards. In the celluloid world of Bong Revilla, women are either dote or virgin, wives are forgiving, and a real man is someone with a gun in one hand and a bazooka in the other. This is Bong Revilla, whose actions love affairs while married to his wife and former actress-partner Lani Mercado who provided leading for two movies because, and whose film of schoolgirl rape of a love child for an father—who himself behaved bigger minor offspring at the age of 17!—is nearing him on the value of a good marriage. This is Bong Revilla, senator of the Republic, who rimmed glasses in place, pounding the lectern in a privilege speech demanding immediate from a "maniac" and a "pervert" who has caused a believe is tried in jail.

There is little doubt as to the guilt of one Dr. Hayden Eby, erstwhile lover of plastic surgery-gassed Dr. Vicki Belo—by of the evil banksters, greasing hips, and unfathomable love for George Michael. He has admitted to filming a number of sessions without their consent during sex, and whether he is responsible for the distribution of those videos, the act of filming alone is enough to warn him behind bars.

What is perhaps stunning about the entire Hayden Eby-Belo-Yuhs-Habib scenario is the level of amorphism it is getting from the national government. The Senate claims a holistic investigation in aid of legislation to avoid to ensure that instances like this will not happen again. Senator Sotto, in a GMA7 interview, claims that it is an existing law that will not. One suspects alike, with the exception of perhaps a case of child abuse the villa says he has unadulterated evidence that Sho did film a minor) or civil damages. It is this "nonlaw" legislation that Revilla wants to change with his glaring bright in shining armor, forgetting perhaps that Eby can be held liable under the Anti-Voyeurism Act of 2009 (RA 9995).

It is difficult to understand why the senator wants to use the need to waste national funds on getting Eby and Habib against each other. Eby does not deny his responsibility. Habib has done little but weep and rail, and while the canvas are trained on the tears rolling down her cheek, the Comelec is allowed to continue its dismal performance, a landslide slips completely off the front page, and the 1209 days leave their conservative entrances. When the story first exploded, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita urged all the women in Dr. Belo's sex videos to press charges, saying that "anything that is offensive to public morals must be sanctioned." It was Ermita who, in 2007, said that GMA refuse to pay on torture violations in the Philippines. Perhaps rape and strangulation are not offensive compared to court orders. Allegations of Filipina rapes in Subic did not instigate petulage speeches by Bong Revilla. Charges of torture did not make Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez demand the blacklisting of some Puerto Rican Marines.

And this is where humanity again winks into the limelight and dominantly comes to bop. All of a sudden every man is a puritan, even the gentlemen of the Senate who "just happened" to view the sex videos. There is suddenly talk again about the evils of sex among the new generation, and a law, authored by Bong Pop Cayetano, seeking to safeguard the interest of the State against the menace" of "pornographic materials" that "disrupt the peace and order of the country." Pornography, he calls it, anything that represents by whatever means a person (whether minor or an adult) "engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any other representation of the sexual parts of a person for primarily sexual purpose that appeals to the prurient sexual interest that are libidinous or emotional feeling."

It is a law that has nothing to do with the Hayden Eby case, whose main issue is essentially a concealed lack of consent. Neither does this explain why Revilla and other senators insisted on keeping the investigation public, when calling legislation can work whether or not witnesses are in the room or grandstand. And yet the national outrage can see very well justify the passing of a law whose definition can give Mamding Morato a reason to lock out another "Schindler's List." And on it would mean a farewell to films from "Desperado" to "Scarface Nights" to "Inception Quezon" to "A Aide for Hire" "Singing Bee II" to "Pinoy Big Brother Quezon" to "Ang Babae Sa Hawak" and "Kill Bill" and National Geographic features. It can hardly tell half the bookshelves of Fully Booked. Brillante Mendoza, current Cannes best director, will find himself behind bars for producing last year's critically acclaimed "Serbis." I do not want the gentlemen of the Senate to define what is aesthetic, what is immoral, and what is crude, as they do not recognize clichéness in themselves.

It is unnecessary to argue that it is the height of hypocrisy for such a man to propose such a bill, the only added virtue of this law would perhaps be the banning of Bong Revilla films from the shelves of Video City.

THEY SAID

Truth hurts

"You know, Senator President Juan Ponce Enrile's other name is the truth. What have is when we say his first he is saying this a matter, is fantasy and a professional drops in the running of the affairs of the commissioner. And that is the truth."

—Sen. Agapito Aquino III

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A 'passion project' and a passionate cause

AT LARGE

Ninez Cacho-Olivares

"PASSION PROJECTS" IS HOW DOCUMENTARY filmmaker Dina Candino describes her body of work. Her films range from "Minsan Lang Sila Ito" to (They Are Children Only Once)," her first purpose that deals with child labor, to "Kiko," a film on the homeless boy who lives in urban poor barrio living along the railroad tracks, and "Bintas (The Youngest)," which exposed the plight of children kept in prisons and proved maltreatment in the passage of the Juvenile Justice Bill.

Her "Lupang Hinirang (Blessed Land)," filmed between 2004 to 2008, is her "passion project" on a different plane. "It's something what love can make you do," she confessed to the audience at the "Red Carpet Premiere" last Thursday at the Ateneo. Though she had to flee her assigned to rest from arbitrary films and stories on human rights violations, she found herself not to spend time with the protesting farmers, who are the subjects of the film, if she wanted to spend time as well with her boyfriend, now her husband.

He happens to be an "alternative lawyer" working with Gadapan, an organization that assists farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples and children victims of abuse, and every time she is tired of help against the powerful and influential. She recalls being moved by the stories of the families therein and the Task Force Mapalad farmers, but at first, she was not sure if she could do a documentary, and wanted to rest from films that engage and entrape. But wishing to spend time with her lawyer-boyfriend as he helped both groups of farmers with their struggles, Dina took up her camera and accumulated thousands of hours of stories, memories and family stories and their struggles, their hardship, their frustrations, and their small victories.

* * *

"LUPANG Hinirang" is obviously a cross on "Lupang Hinirang," the chosen land, one of those land by which our national anthem refers to heaven. It is also an ironic commentary that to this country of bountiful land and rich resources, inequity-breadlessness is destined to thrive who need it most, whose lives are planted in the soil, whose blood has been spilt in its defense.

The last is especially true of both groups of farmers. The Haciendas farmers had struggled to legal and status legal measures to get the government to finally implement the orders from the Department of Agrarian Reform granting them ownership of a plantation. The owners had managed to reverse the decision, claiming the land was no longer "agricultural," and if DAR's Hungry strike staged in Manila to get the attention of the Aquino administration. A "win-win" solution was arrived at, but the landowner elevated the case to the Supreme Court. When he won that appeal, the farmers were turned over to the Philippine Tobacco Corp., which planned to convert it into a piggery. It was then that the farmers decided to reclaim on a 1,700-km journey on foot, through searing sun and muddy waters, to personally bring their petition to Malacañang.

Even filmmaker was the experience of the farmers of Task Force Mapalad. Though the government had long decided in their favor regarding the ownership of a hacienda in Negros Occidental, landowner Roberto Ventura used his influence to get the land reclassified as a shoe of the First Development to keep the farmers at bay. After one of them was killed when he was fired upon by Ventura's goons, they decided to bring their protest to Manila, in front of the DAR office. There, they began a hunger strike that lasted 50 days—during which 18 of them would feel until the DAR acted on their petition, protesting them and supporting them in their savage hour of the land that is rightfully theirs.

* * *

IT IS never easy nor comfortable to watch a film Candino film. Too often, the footage evoke feelings of guilt and unease, self-recrimination and remorse. It is especially difficult to sit through the images of the Task Force Mapalad farmers, especially the desperation of their supporters as they storm into the house by the barrio' quires and struggle to keep their sites.

Even more difficult to suppress is the anger and disgust that well up and find expression in curses interrupted under one's breath. Spokesperson Ernesto Ordoñez (the film repeatedly states his name) struggle of the farmers is not limited to the law, because the legality of their claims has long been settled. "What they wanted and started to use was to face political will: attention, recognition and ultimately action from the national powers that be. What they wanted was not property, not government's generosity or pity, but government's will, impetus to recognize what is right, to respect their rights and support them as they asserted it.

* * *

SINCE more, true, Dina finds herself behoving a film pushing a particular line, this time the Carper or Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension and Reform bill. By law, the agrarian reform program is supposed to expire in a few days. In its last "extension," the program has undergone a few changes in timing and purpose by removing the provision on compulsory land acquisition. The new bill would ensure that agrarian reform not only fulfills its mandate, but that the remaining 1.3 million hectares of private "CARP-able" lands are distributed to the original beneficiaries.

One of the surviving Mapalad farmers commented at the film showing's end how funny it was that "instead of the government in Manila going on as in the provinces to reach an almost deal, it was the provinces in the provinces who had to go to Manila to touch the officials about the law." Our legislators have only a few days on power that what it comes to issues of the law and the land, they are not as ignorant or hard-hearted as they have so far shown themselves to be.

Iran's young guards

WORLD VIEW

Bijan Khajehpour

TEHRAN—IRANIANS WILL GO TO THE POLLS on June 12 to elect a new president. While some argue that President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's re-election is a foregone conclusion, the outcome is, in fact, not at all clear.

Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has repeatedly said in public sessions that he will not declare his preference among the candidates. Indeed, in Mashad on March 21, Ayatollah Khamenei said that "the Islamic Republic system will not interpret a special candidate for the presidential elections. But I have one vote, and I would not determine a certain candidate because the people themselves should choose their candidates." Still, the vote is known only to God.

So how will the Iranian people weigh their votes? To answer, one needs to understand the composition of the Iranian electorate. With the voting age set at just 16 years, Iran has roughly 48 million eligible voters. Turnout averages 60-65 percent in presidential elections, implying that around 29 million votes are likely to be cast.

Analysts point to several electoral cleavages, particularly the urban-rural split and socioeconomic status. Moreover, a key determinant of voting behavior is the opposing elements as filled to the brim with the young people of the electorate is under the age of 30. In previous elections, younger voters have turned out in greater numbers than their elders, leading some to predict that half of the votes will be in the 30-to-29 age bracket. Another 20 percent will be first-time voters (16 to 19 years old) scattered to 6 million.

Several factors distinguish members of this group from the rest of the Iranian electorate. They are more educated, more urbanized, and more internationally oriented than previous generations. Many are computer savvy and networked, and, of this group, a majority is female. They have branched out into new lines of work and social engagement.

As in this setting, only two presidential candidates have declared themselves: former Prime Minister Mir Hossein Mousavi and former parliament speaker Mehdi Karroubi. Assuming that Ahmadinejad will seek re-election, this line-up is not any candidate with clear appeal to the youth vote. Given their dissatisfaction, it would be natural for young voters to take out their frustrations on Ahmadinejad.

One seemingly unrelated event to watch in the months before the presidential vote. Iran will play two critical football matches as part of the qualifying round for the 2010 World Cup. If Iran fails to qualify, this would not a waste young voters against the incumbent.

Among the other candidates, who will pick up the slack?

Mousavi, Iran's prime minister between 1981 and 1989, is heavily known to young voters. However, his campaign has been blasting that, if elected, Mousavi will loosen some social and cultural restrictions.

Karroubi, too, is handicapped among the young. Many consider him to be an old, out-of-touch cleric with no feel for their concerns.

Former President Mohammad Khatami, who openly considered voting again for the office, would be the ideal candidate for young voters. His decision not to run disappointed many of them.

Standing in the wings are two possible candidates who might take up where Khatami left off, and address the economic and cultural concerns of young Iranians. Mohammad Reza Khatami, Khatami's brother, and Mohammad Saqqaf Qadiqi, now mayor of Tehran and formerly the country's chief of police, has a relatively moderate track record and an image of someone who can get things done.

But Qadiqi still has one taken the plunge. If he does not, it is hard to see any candidate emerging, the youth bloc in Iran's elections may have nowhere to turn. Without a voice for their concerns, Iran's young people face the prospect of increased frustration, whatever the outcome of the election.

Project Syndicate

Bijan Khajehpour is a Tehran-based strategic consultant and the chair of the Arish Group.

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to [redacted]

Julia Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Protect plan holders' money

By Evangeline Griscom-Dorotheo

WE KNOW THAT EDUcation and pension-oriented plans are akin to insurance endowment plans. These were packaged by former insurance marketing executives to look like a true pool of trust to be regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and, thus, our side-sticks' insurance regulations.

Over the past 10 years, the collapse of more than 50 preneed companies has victimized more than one million Filipinos. Many of them work abroad, far away from their families, and many others include public school teachers and employees, small businessmen, poor farmers and retirees.

These people lost more than P100 billion in savings to these preneed companies because of improper regulation. Preneed plans that promise to give future tuition or retirement benefits have been regulated as investment securities under the supervision of the SEC.

Urgent changes

In 1990 when I was president of the Actuarial Society of the Philippines (ASP), I encouraged ASP actuaries to volunteer to help the SEC correct the defects and inadequacies of the preneed rules and regulations. We knew that urgent changes were needed to prevent the bankruptcy of preneed companies and to protect the investors of the exploding number of education-and-pension preneed plan holders.

For almost 14 years, five of us who served as volunteer actuaries advised the SEC on how to strengthen the preneed industry. It was a long, laborious struggle against the strong lobby of the Federation of Preneed Plan Companies and many current and ex-SEC officials.

The SEC played dumb to our cause perhaps because to officials naive of what of implementing major changes in the practices of preneed companies is, many, because they received bribes from preneed companies.

Flawed business model

It was clear to us even then that the preneed business model was flawed. We showed the SEC the wrong pricing and liability valuation bases and assumptions being used by the preneed companies.

Through many different scenarios, we demonstrated that preneed companies would not be able to pay the future promised the plan holders' children and the pension benefits of retirees. So, we introduced a new pricing and valuation model, but we were repeatedly rebuffed by the Federation of Preneed Plan Companies through the SEC.

It was not just a flawed business model. There are other key aspects that should have been remedied in for the public good.

The preneed plan contracts are inequitable to plan holder protection. The plan holder gets only 50 percent of the money he pays to the preneed company if the termination he plans even a few days before maturity.

Unfair

It is also unfair for plan holders who get nothing—not even a partial return of what they have paid—simply because they could not pay the last few installments.

The preneed accounting standards allow massive underestimation of liabilities and overstatement of assets of preneed companies. Thus, the trust funds are usually inadequate to pay the promised benefits.

Likewise, companies' profits are overstated such that dividends to companies' stockholders are declared and officers are paid exorbitant fringe benefits.

Because of inappropriate accounting, the SEC has tolerated large questionable investments in real estate in the 1990s. These investments led to many huge and then maybe valueless dividend, causing the trust funds to deteriorate.

Wrong accounting

We completed the revised accounting guidelines with the active support of then Commissioner Rosabella Casquejo. When the guidelines were implemented in 2000, almost all preneed companies were declared insolvent. We could not understand why the SEC declared the full implementation of the new guidelines.

PLAN HOLDERS of the collapsed preneed firms of the Legacy Group at their concerns to Sen. Mar Roxas, chair of the Senate committee investigating the troubled preneed industry. The Securities and Exchange Commission revoked in April the licenses of Prudential Plans and Permanent Plans to sell preneed plans because of their inadequate trust funds.

Questions from a Prudential plan holder

My brother and I bought two memorial plan policies from Prudential in 2002. Both plans have been paid for...my brother received his certificate of ownership on Oct. 31, 2005. I got mine on June 2, 2006.

Apart from the regular features of the policy like provisions for funeral services, etc., there is also a Money Back Benefit (MBB). This means that 10 years after the contract price has been fully paid, the plan holder is entitled to receive "an amount equivalent to 300 percent of the contract price or 600."

The stories that have been coming out in the newspapers and on radio and television do not mention anything about memorial plan holders being told that they would receive their MBB 10 years after full payment.

Will Prudential assist my brother that he will get his MBB on Oct. 31, 2015, as provided for in his contract? Will I get the same assurance on June 3, 2016, as also shown in my contract? Ester G. Dipasupil ,Prudential Memorial Plan policy holder

C&P and Pacific Plans find the biggest deficiency life events. Needed that these companies not be allowed to sell more in the public unless corrective actions were adopted. The two firms argued that they could pay the benefits then due. Yet, we now know that C&P and Pacific Plans were indeed insolvent and that they victimized more than one million Filipinos.

Studies

Many small companies stopped operating because they experienced liquidity problems in the late 1990s. In early 2000, a list of small firms were not granted licenses due to the cancellation of their trust funds.

In 2002, the Department of Trade and Industry, headed by now Sen. Manuel Roxas II, engaged the United States Agency for International Development to conduct a study to strengthen the preneed industry for the protection of consumers. I provided USAID with actuarial and technical analyses.

Preliminary reports of the USAID projects chief reforms needed to improve the conditions of preneed companies. The Federation of Preneed Plan Companies under the leadership of Juan Ponce Enrile vehemently opposed the findings and recommendations, claiming that preneed firms were in good shape. It threatened to file a case against USAID and the research team.

The USAID studies that forewarned our people were not released.

It was during this period that the Senate and the House of Representatives were deliberating on preneed bills of different forms, with unclear directions as to who would supervise the preneed industry—the SEC or Insurance Commission. The Enhanced Bad Boy Law, arguing that preneed plans should remain under the SEC instead with Insurance and negotiable rules. Apparently, lessons were learned from the failure of C&P and Pacific Plans.

Thank God, the Senate assured the investigations of the distressed Legacy preneed firms. I hope that is no repeat-not-ever to pass a law declaring that preneed plans are insurance contracts.

I suggest that this law contain provisions strengthening the Insurance Commission and establishing an adequate Security Fund. Three provisions are:

• To ensure that Deputy Commissioner positions to assist the Insurance Commissioner in regulating and supervising the life insurance and preneed sector, note like general insurance sector actuarial and technical support group, and administrative group.

• To align the salaries of Insurance Commission employees with those of the SEC's and so provide additional budget to offset the changes.

• To revise the Security Fund provisions of the Insurance Code requiring that 1/10 of 1 percent of gross premiums earned be contributed to the Fund annually for every insurance and preneed company. The Fund shall pay overriding claims of not more than P1 million per insured individual that remain unpaid after liquidation of a defaulted insurance or preneed firm. The fund shall be invested only in Philippine government securities and all interest shall accrue to it. The Fund shall be administered by the Insurance Commission. The proposed new share of an insurance company to the fund shall be considered admitted asset.

Other existing provisions should not be amended for it may weaken the Insurance Code, particularly those on the admissibility of assets and valuation of liabilities. Other provisions of the Code and existing rules and regulations should remain as they are effective to governing the public.

Additional budget

The additional budget for reorganizing and adjusting Insurance Commission employees' salaries with those of SEC staff members is not covered by the accumulated Insurance Commission Fund, which is being managed by the Office of the Treasurer of the Philippines. It may be recalled that when the premium tax was increased to 5 percent, there was an allocation of 20 percent of the premium tax collection to the Insurance Commission. Please forgive me for reminding the culpability of the commission in regulating and supervising the insurance and related industry. That fund reached almost P2 billion in 2007.

Another issue with competitive salaries, the Insurance Commission can hire and retain full-time actuary more lawyers and IT personnel. This will make the Insurance Commission more effective in regulating and supervising the industry, thus assuring that the public will get additional protection against malpractices and abuses of some market players.

This law must be passed to help restore the confidence of savers, especially the poor, and other people in investing their future.

Declaring preneed plans as insurance contracts will mean that regulation arbitrage will be minimized. The level playing field will prevail and the public will be protected.

(This article is based on a letter Evangeline Griscom-Dorotheo sent to Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, the law fellow of both the Actuarial Society of the Philippines and the Life Manager must become. She is a former Insurance Commissioner (2005-2007) and SEC actuarial consultant. Also currently a Alumni Fellow MPA'09 (Harvard Kennedy School.)

Growth and decline of preneed industry

PRENEED PLANS ARE contracts that provide for future services or payment of money at the time of actual need. They are education, pension and memorial plans.

The preneed business in the country began in 1968 with the establishment of Pacific Memorial Plan Inc. (which became Pacific Plans Inc. or PPI). Pacific Memorial offered memorial service regardless of actual cost at the time it is to be used.

In 1976, Professional Pension Plan Inc. (which became Professional Financial Plans) offered the first preneed pension plan, which enabled plan holders to receive benefits upon retirement or maturity of the plan.

Four years later, College Assurance Plan (CAP) introduced the traditional or open-ended education plan, which provided for tuition and other expenses. This open-ended plan stipulated that the preneed company would disburse the tuition of the beneficiaries regardless of any tuition increases.

Between 1994 and 2001, CAP and other preneed companies received enormous premiums, with sales growing 127 percent. By 2006, the industry had accumulated a trust fund of P94.27 billion.

A trust fund, an asset account that includes stocks, real estate and bonds, must provide a sufficient source of money at any given time to pay for current and future obligations.

After the rapid growth came the decline.

From 2001 to 2003, CAP's trust fund assets yielded returns of 3.86 percent, way below the more than 200 percent increase in income. Still, CAP and other companies persisted in selling open-ended plans.

This caused the company's trust fund deficiency to reach P17.2 billion. In 2004, CAP issued dishonored checks amounted to P1.49.82 million.

In 2005, both CAP and PPI filed for rehabilitation with the Makati Regional Trial Court, citing their inability to service debts and pay future claims.

Partly this year, investment banker and Asian Spirit Airlines founder Noel Oñate announced his purchase of PPI for P250 million.

The industry's decline can be attributed to the continued sale of open-ended plans despite the deregulation of tuitions in 1992 that led to the skyrocketing of tuition; the 1997 Asian financial crisis that caused trust fund investments to have lower interest yields.

Inappropriate accounting practices; collusion among preneed companies and their affiliates; investment in related companies and interlocking directorates; lack of capability by the regulator to adequately monitor the industry; and lack of a PDIC-type insurance for the industry.

Efforts in Congress to tighten the rules on the preneed industry and put it under the Insurance Commission are still in statutes from the Philippine Federation of Preneed Plan Companies.

In January this year, Legacy Consolidated Plans and two other Legacy Group preneed companies—Scholarship Plans Philippines Inc. and Mi Ami Plans Corp.—entered open accounts. The Legacy preneed firms owe P1.3 billion to some 30,000 plan holders, including some 12,000 police officers and soldiers.

In April, the SEC revoked the licenses of Prudential Plans Inc. and Permanent Plans to sell preneed plans because of deficiencies in their trust funds.

The SEC now lists less than 25 preneed companies with licenses to sell plans for 2009, compared with the 82 registered with the commission since it assumed supervision of the industry in 1976. With Elmar Ylaoria, Inquirer Research

A MILLION ROSARIES IN HONOR OF MARY, MEDIATRIX OF ALL GRACE

"There is no problem, however difficult it maybe, whether temporal or spiritual, personal or familial, national or international that cannot be solved by the prayer of the Rosary!" (Sister Lucy of Fatima)

COME AND JOIN US IN HUMBLE PRAYER TO BESEECH HEAVEN FOR DIVINE GRACES!

This initiative, spearheaded by the Confraternity of Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace strives and hopes to offer to Our Lady a bouquet of 1 Million rosaries from all her devotees: the clergy, the religious and the faithful from far and wide, both in the Philippines and abroad who will pray the Holy Rosary on a personally chosen time day/s from May 31, 2009 Feast of the Pentecost and to culminate on December 8, 2009.

Our intentions for this Rosary Crusade are:

1. For the Holy Father and all the bishops and clergy of the world

Beginning June 19, 2009, the Universal Church will observe the Year of the Priest as declared by Pope Benedict XVI. Let us pray for the Holy Father in his effort to renew the priesthood. Let us also pray for the sanctification of all the clergy and the religious and in particular our bishops and parish priests, that they may be fortified in leading and guiding the Catholic faithful to a life of holiness amidst an increasingly secularized environment.

2. For the sanctification of the family

The family is the basic unit of society, destroy it and society will eventually crumble. In the face of the many schemes to tear down the family, especially with the attempt to pass the dangerous Reproductive Health Bill, let us turn to the Mediatrix of All Grace to mediate with Jesus, the Author of all graces for the Filipino family so they will be preserved from the evil that has engulfed our society.

3. For True devotion to our Blessed Mother to flourish in our country

According to the great Marian saint, St. Louis Grignion de Montfort, "Mary is the pathway to her Son, leading souls quickly and securely to Jesus Christ, the Eternal Wisdom" who is the source of true and lasting spiritual and moral regeneration.

In observance of the Year of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus as declared by the CBCP beginning June 29, 2009 let us pray for the grace of a deeper and true devotion to Mary so she can lead us to true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

4. For the graces necessary to guide the authorities deliberating the authenticity of the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, as Mediatrix of All Grace at Lipa.

Prior to the canonical approval of the Fatima apparitions, the country of Portugal was in a grave state of decadence in the spiritual, moral, political and economic sphere. But a miraculous transformation transpired which the Portuguese Hierarchy could only attribute to the positive response of the faithful and the subsequent official recognition of the apparitions on October 13, 1930.

Let us pray that those who are tasked to deliberate on the 1948 apparitions at Lipa will be guided by Holy Wisdom to discern its validity and thereafter make the necessary official pronouncements. Like Fatima, we may also experience the outpouring of graces for our country.

The power of the Holy Rosary has been proven many times in the past Let us unite and respond generously!

Each rosary constitutes the recitation of five decades. To easily achieve a continuous string of rosaries 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, we enjoin every one to invite their relatives and friends abroad to also make a pledge. No extra rosary is required, just add the intentions above to your daily rosary.

To help us keep track of your pledges, kindly fill up the form and mail them to us. You may also email or text them using the same format below. This will be laid at the feet of the Mediatrix of All Grace at her shrine in Lipa and consequently offered to the Holy Father as a manifestation of our cooperation and support in his noble task to shepherd the Catholic faithful of the world especially during the observance of the Year of the Priest.

Pledge Form
I promise to pray the rosary in honor of Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace

Daily (time, optional) _____ **Weekly** (day, time optional)_____
From (start) _____ **to** (end) _____
Address & telephone #_____
_____
Signature above printed Name _____ **Date** _____

Mailing address: Confraternity of Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace
c/o Rev. Fr. Melvyn P. Cadiao
Bishop's Residence, Tarlac City, 2300

Email Address confraternityofmarymediatrixofallgrace.com

Cell phone # (pledges by text must contain your address)
Globe +639279024227 **Smart** +639087273482 **Sun** +639322753199

Your pledges will be acknowledged by a text message

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Rosy Burgonia

Kidnappers want P13M for Chinese victim

KAMACAN, NORTH COTABATO—THE PENTAGON kidnap for ransom gang has suddenly increased the amount of ransom it wanted for the freedom of a vacationing Chinese national, who was abducted here on Wednesday evening.

Lt. Col. Jonathan Pinon, spokesperson of the military's 6th Division, yesterday said the leaders Gat Mayangkang Sagulile, a leader of the Pentagon Gang, relayed the new demand of P13 million in a government-to-government meeting for the release of 29-year-old Alex Ma Mly.

North Cotabato Gov. Jesus Sacdalan told the Inquirer he was not aware of the ransom demand.

"There's no such information about the ransom. What is clear is that there's no ongoing negotiations," he said.

More money

But Sakakibak Coop, a staffer of Kabasalan Mayor Georgie Sin, confirmed that the Pentagon now wanted more money from Mly's relatives here.

The Inquirer learned that the Pentagon has earlier asked Mly's relatives to shell out P500,000 so that she could already be released.

A source, who requested anonymity for lack of authority to speak on the matter, said Mly was supposed to be released on Thursday evening but it was stalled because Sagulile changed his mind and wanted P13 million instead.

The source also said that Sagulile was trying hard to avoid soldiers who are now hunting him and his men. Sagulile has divided his group into two smaller groups.

Different person?

Eid Kabalu, spokesperson of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), said the MILF's intelligence operatives gathered information saying that the abductor of Mly was not Mayangkang Ingalin's group but that of another Pentagon leader bearing the same surname.

"I think the military is referring to Tom Ingalin... another leader of kidnapping operating in North Cotabato area. Not Mayangkang Ingalin," Kabalu said.

The Pentagon works by cell and is run by different commanders in Mindanao areas, where it operates.

Founded in the 1980's by former Moro National Liberation Front commander Nilad Merahombsar in Ismin del Sur, it grew to become one of the most notorious kidnap for ransom groups in the country.

Most its founding, the Pentagon had already abducted at least 30 persons, including a son of former vice president Emmanuel Pelaez. Jaeffrey Hapitan, Inquirer Mindanao

LIVELIHOOD
A resident of the coastal village of Talicud in the island Garden City of Samal gathers seashells, taking the opportunity to do so offered by the ebbing tide.

Gov't accepts OFW presence in risky areas

"We know for a fact that a lasting work ban only encourages migrant workers to try new tactics... like go through the backdoor..."

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—The government has reluctantly adopted relayed helplessness in stopping the flight of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to countries where deployment is banned because of conflicts or wars.

But it has seen negotiating teams to these countries to secure better protection for the Filipino workers, Labor Undersecretary Romulada Baldoz said on Wednesday (the clarified, however, that the talks were not meant to encourage the OFWs).

Filipino domestic helpers are still barred from entering Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and other countries due to armed conflicts there.

Baldoz said the steady flight to conflict areas by undocumented OFWs had forced the government to tap its regular OFW work force without officially endorsing them.

The government wants to ensure that it can identify migrant workers who enter these countries through the backdoor so they can be protected and immediately repatriated, if necessary, Baldoz told reporters after the launching of the public-service program "Ugnayang Bayan."

Government negotiators are drafting terms on the entry, length of stay, and documentation of migrant workers in Lebanon and Jordan, Baldoz said.

He wants bans here seen not yet to long become the Department of Foreign Affairs has not cleared that country to settle, she said.

The negotiations would help the government to determine whether the migrant work ban imposed on such countries should remain, Baldoz said.

"We know for a fact that a lasting work ban only encourages migrant workers to try new tactics to enter [war-torn countries], like go through the backdoor," she said.

FILIPINO workers wear masks at the central district of Hong Kong amid scare over the AH1N1 virus.

Capiz execs seek probe of colleague

Board member's name mentioned in murder case

By Felipe R. Calleja
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—TWO MEMBERS OF THE Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) of Capiz asked the body to investigate a colleague implicated by a witness in the May 7 murder of the political officer of Rep. Antonio del Rosario.

In a privilege speech delivered during the board's session on Thursday, Capiz Provincial Board Member Vicente Fritz Cruz-Am said the witness to the killing of Arthur Cruz heard that the name Ardiffila was mentioned during a conversation between the victim and the three suspects.

Cruz-Am made a motion to constitute the SP as a committee of the whole to give Provincial Board Member Gilbert Ardiffila the opportunity to clear his name and to clarify rumors of conspiracy in the killing of Cruz.

Cruz-Am presented the photocopies of the witness' two-page sworn statement on what transpired shortly before the shooting of Del Rosario's political officer Arthur Cruz, who was declared dead upon arrival at the Roxas Memorial Provincial Hospital in Roxas City.

The witness recalled that while she and her boyfriend were passing time at a waiting shed in Roxas City, Cruz was talking with three other persons, two of whom she later identified as engineer Ethel Mendoza of the Capiz 1st engineering district and Sto. Barbara administrator Gloria Bruy.

The three persons started arguing with Cruz and threatened him, after Cruz said there was no money to obtain because a contract project has not been completed. One of them told the name Ardiffila mentioned.

The witness and she and her boyfriend left on their motorcycle when they were driven away by one of the three suspects and when a warning shot was fired at them.

Cruz-Am said that the investigation would protect the integrity of the provincial board as an institution.

Board Member Enrique Martin, who supported Cruz-Am's proposal, said the case would not be sub judice since the case was still pending at the Roxas City Prosecutor's Office.

However, the proposed resolution calling for an investigation did not push through due to lack of quorum when Ardiffila failed to return to the session hall after a few minutes of recess called by the presiding officer, Board Member Esteban Evan Contreras.

Reaching out to more Filipino families: NNC holds training on good nutrition

The National Nutrition Council (NNC) is working double time to ensure that the objectives of the Promote Good Nutrition (PGN) component of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Accelerated Hunger Mitigation Program (AHMP) are achieved. The PGN aims to improve the food and nutrition knowledge, attitude, and practices of Filipino families.

Just recently, the NNC conducted the "Training of City/Municipal Implementers on Promotion of Good Nutrition for the Province of Occidental Mindoro" as part of the PGN. The training equips program implementers with the necessary skills in counseling and giving support to mothers on infant and young child feeding, among others.

Held at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City, the training was participated in by over 25 health officers, nutrition action officers, public health nurses, and midwives from cities and municipalities of Occidental Mindoro.

At the week-long training seminar, Alicia Ramos (shown in photo) briefed participants on the AHMP. A nationwide pro-poor campaign, the AHMP aims to address hunger, malnutrition, poverty, people's inability to purchase food, malnutrition, and food security. Ramos also discussed the "Updated Medium-Term Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition" and the "Nutritional Guidelines for Filipinos."

INQUIRER Mindanao

THE HOUSE of Hope Inc. in Lumbia, Cagayan de Oro City has been a shelter for mentally handicapped patients for more than 10 years. More than 50 percent of its population are women between the ages of 21-34 years old. (N. RODRIGUEZ/INQUIRER MINDANAO)

House of hope for mentally ill

By Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez
Cagayan de Oro City

WITH HER PARCHED HANDS CLUTCHING THE THIN STEEL BARS separating the female ward from the receiving area, Arlene murmured her personal hopes and let out a soft cry.

For six years now, Arlene (not her real name) has been under the care of the Missionary Congregation of Mary in a psychiatric facility that caters to patients who cannot afford expensive treatment in private hospitals.

Aptly called the House of Hope, the shelter took her in at a time when no one, not even her own family, would accept her.

Abandoned with love and care by the nuns and faithful volunteers, Arlene soon recovered from mental illness and eventually became well enough to fend for herself.

"Eto na siya oh (she has this one) hardly refused to leave her bed, and, although we rarely lock (gate) here, we don't want to just let her leave, she might end up again on the streets," said Sr. Fely Dagumboto, the shelter's assistant administrator.

Least fortunate

"Poor people who had been rejected because of their condition, who roam around the city unwanted and uncared for, they are the ones we are after. They need to be saved," said Sister Fely of their mission.

"The least fortunate people are those who are so poor that they barely eat and this condition leads to mental illness," she added.

In 1997, the Diocese of Malaybalay and the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro agreed to establish a center for mentally challenged patients whose families are not capable of providing them care.

Run by the CMC nuns under the Diocesan Apostolate, the House of Hope in the village of Lumbia, some 20 kilometers from Cagayan de Oro City's central district, now functions a lone care facility where volunteers, charity makers and philanthropists would pour upon their help.

"Little by little, we were able to develop this place, from one small building where all our patients were housed in a bigger, more modern facility," sa (nun) Sister Fely.

The nuns used to travel all the way to St. Augustine Cathedral in the town center to get the patients' daily water ration. Sometimes soon came to build a spring well. Gallons of drinking water were also donated daily by a local businessman.

Medicines came daily for the patients sponsored by the Ormoc Diocesan Hospital and several drug companies.

"Food also pour in. We consume one sack of rice per day. It cannot be explained (yun) we get by not knowing where else will we get enough food, donations just come," said Sister Fely overwhelmed by the support coming from private individuals and unknown benefactors.

The facility currently keeps 53 patients, majority of whom are female.

One of a kind

"We have various cases of mental illness, some are naturally mentally retarded, or just victims of trauma, like child abuse, domestic violence or rape," said volunteer nurse Carmen Soliman.

Arlene was the shelter's first case of mental breakdown due to severe trauma.

"I was recruited by someone to become a dancer, but he took me to Pagadian (capital city of Zamboanga del Sur) and I didn't like what they did to me there," Arlene said, meaning to dig from her memory a painful past.

Arlene continued: "I had a child but I remember that the child died right after I received it."

She then remembers nothing else, except her years of confinement in the shelter and her many sessions with the nuns.

The patients soon get well if they are given proper medical attention and personal care, Arlene said.

"We conduct more-to-patient interaction and counseling sessions. We also make sure they take their medicine prescribed to them by the psychiatrist," she said.

Sister Fely said the House of Hope could be the only facility of its kind in Mindanao where poor mental patients are given personalized care.

"You cannot find that in a public facility. This is part of the mission of our congregation, to attend to the poorest of the poor," she explained.

6 volunteers

Aside from the CMC nuns, three caregivers and three volunteer nurses are regularly attending to the patients' needs.

"It's not a normal job, but it is fulfilling because I know I'm helping the (poor)," said one volunteer caregiver, who has been with the shelter for almost a decade now.

The Northern Mindanao Medical Center assists in providing psychiatric diagnosis of each patient, as well as other medical needs.

"They go through a medido checkup during which the doctor would test the patient if he or she is well enough to be discharged," Soliman said.

But patients keep coming one after the other that the shelter now has more than 53 in the waiting list.

"Most people seem to breakdown during these times. We cannot do anything but refer them," Sister Fely said with regret.

'Poor people who had been rejected because of their condition, who roam around the city unwanted and uncared for, they are the ones we are after. They need to be saved...'

The Ateneo de Manila University Graduate School of Business and Johnson and Johnson (Philippines), Inc.
are now accepting applicants to the

6th JOHNSON & JOHNSON-ATENEO GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
24TH-29TH AUGUST 2009

This full scholarship course is open to doctors and hospital executives from private and public Philippine hospitals.

The 6-day course aims to address the needs of doctors and senior hospital managers and executives for continuing education and innovative advancement in the field of hospital management. It balances the participants' needs for knowing about the latest innovations in hospital management and in leadership development, values formation in organizations and reflective thinking on ethics in health care management.

Application form and other details are available at www.gsb.ateneo.edu or email Dr. Napoleon K. Juanillo, Jr., Program Director, Leadership and Managerial Excellence in Health Systems at njuanillo@aps.ateneo.edu or nkj2_scipulse@yahoo.com or call Ms. Khrisna U. Reyes at (+63 02) 899 4589 M-F 12:00 nn to 8:00 pm.

Deadline of application is 20 July 2009.

HMP will be held at the Ateneo Professional Schools, Rockwell Center, Makati City

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Old houses of Malabon

There's more to the city's storied past than just the perennial floods

By Beverly T. Mativilul

DESPITE the floods and ravages of time, the exterior and interior features of Malabon's old houses endure and serve as a showcase of the city's rich history.

FLOOD IS THE image one immediately associates with Malabon. Yet, the city boasts of a glorious past etched in its old houses.

A small group composed of people from the Museum Foundation, curious travelers, and loyal Malabon residents recently went on a tour dubbed "Malabon, Lumipas nasin ang Hinahon" (Come, let's delve into Malabon) to revisit the city's glorious history.

With all the livelihood provided by 11 rivers that flow into the area, many old settlers in the old walled city of Manila decided to make Malabon their home. The entrepreneurs—who would grow to be the well-to-do—also did business and settled here.

A visit to the Concepcion area by the trekkers led by tour organizer and architect Richard Tantoco Gochuico Jr. brought them to a cluster of old houses there—a veritable showcase of the city's storied past.

These include the Dizon ancestral house, the Paco-Leus house, and the Rojas-Reyes house. The preservation of these old surviving houses is the same—plus the obvious familial relationships of the owners—attest to the city's popularity among the rich at that time.

The Dizon ancestral house's well-preserved staircase exemplifies some of its old glory with its decorative yellow-painted walls. Built in the early 1870, the Paco house still shows its old ancestry with exterior walls made of stone, and a high pitched roof buttressed from the old bahay kubo for better ventilation.

It also has an old "silong" (space underneath the house often used as a workplace, a garage, or a livestock pen) that now appears lower than ground level with the renovations undertaken by the owners to raise and water-proof the house as protection from floods.

Nearby stands the Paco-Leus house, or what the tour organizers called the "treasure of Malabon." It appears to be an old cheerful house with its wooden exterior darkened through time but the house has many historic wealth characters to it

"OWWA FUNDS ARE NOT enough to help OFWs in distress. We have to do more."

MARIBEL VILLAR, May 2008

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SUNDAY, MAY 11, 2008

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Gerry Lirio

This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world to secure a better life for

Jobless DH in HK returns ₱2.1 million

Grateful owner gives her can of cookies

By Blanche S. Rivera
Correspondent

HONG KONG—Every night in Yuen Long, a far-off area in the New Territories, she rummages through garbage bins for soda cans, cardboard boxes and other recyclables that can earn her HK$30 (P228) on a nice day.

Twenty-three-year-old Hilda Dress, 28-year-old Filipina, like 120,000 others, is working in Hong Kong as a helper, leaving behind her two children in Bantinong, Nueva Vizcaya.

But her dream to build a decent life for her family was crushed when her employers, a passive, sexually-mannered lot in 2007. She lost her job, and losing a complainant in a pending court case, is barred by Hong Kong laws to take up employment.

She has since been unable to support her family, no less children were forced to drop out of school. There are days when she ponders over how to raise money for her family in Nueva Vizcaya, but refuses to think how much better off she would have been had she kept what she found

HONESTY NEXT A PRICE. Mildred Perez in Hong Kong: "I couldn't sleep. That's money. But my conscience would have bothered me no end if I did otherwise."

they just left a message on a recorder, saying they found the money and wished to return it to the owner.

"Of course, I couldn't sleep. It's money. That would have allowed me to go home. But I was thinking, who left the money? What if he is just another worker? He would lose his job. How many people depend on him? I couldn't keep it. My conscience would have bothered me no end if I did otherwise," Perez said.

The lost envelope

That person, it turned out, was Rixy (Perez did not get the full name—Ed.), an HSBC secretary employee tasked by her company to deposit the money in the bank.

Rixy said she realized she had lost the envelope around 2 p.m. on April 29.

At noon on April 30, Rixy and her superior Yvonne Tsang met Perez and Daniel at Fairwood in Tin Shui Wai for the handover.

Philippine Overseas Labor Office officials, who got wind of Perez's overpolicies' deed through Perez's friend Shirly Rizada, had assisted the turnover to be done at the Philippine Consulate for proper documentation, but Perez acceded to the request. He's modest in how it is the province.

Tokens of gratitude

"Following procedures rule," Perez said, adding that Rixy even told the company officials that the Filipina was jobless and would never have that amount of money even if the hard work again in domestic helper.

Tsang and Rixy gave Perez a can of butter cookies as a token of gratitude, and Perez quietly returned her life.

She is now back to collecting scraps and now, returning into the buy-and-sell of used clothing because she constantly needs money to extend her visa until her case is resolved.

Her case, which has yet to be scheduled for its final hearing, has not progressed, and this prevents the Filipina from being employed or returning to the Philippines to be with her family.

High cost of living

"It's been a long time. Nothing is happening. Do they think it's that easy to rummage through the garbage bins? Sometimes, I wanted to give up," she said, breaking down at the thought of her two kids having to postpone college because she could not support them.

Perez is also saving up for the HK$3,000 cost of a minor surgery she needs to remove a growing clump of flesh on her head.

She does not know when she can attend to this, as coming up with the HK$3000 visa renewal fee alone every few weeks is a challenge.

Last month, Perez could hardly pay the fare to return her passport at the Philippine Consulate and she almost did not return her visa on May 20, if not for friends and strangers who pooled their own meager resources to help a fellow Filipina.

She even in these times, the Filipina refuses to contemplate home much better off she would have been had she decided not to return the money.

Strict, honest father

The cash alone is that sweet hope was equivalent to P1 million, a considerable wealth to her hometown in Barangay Abaga, in Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya, where her family, though poor, strives to live with integrity.

Perez's father, a local official in their barangay, can be credited with Perez's inherent honesty. He was very strict when it came to his children taking or even accepting anything that is not theirs.

In her second guide, Perez recalled how she and her friends Adong, a chessy-cupcake shoot, from a neighbor's yard to use for playing inside the house. When her father learned of her indiscretion from the neighbor, he put her inside a sack and reprimanded her harshly.

The lesson stuck.

"After some encouragement to overlook detail, if it does not belong to you, don't take it!" she said in her local dialect lingo.

She has kept true to this, even if it means she has to keep digging trash to survive.

DIGNITY IN POVERTY. Mildred's daughter, mother and father at their house in Barangay Abaga in Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya. She says the very reasons she chooses to stay honest.

Unfair treatment of Filipino veterans continues

A LETTER RECEIVED FROM A Filipino World War II veteran resident takes a brave stance regarding the denials of many claims for lump sum benefits. He filed for lump sum benefit of $15,000 as a US citizen veteran with the US Department of Veterans Affairs (US DVA). This is a claim for Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation passed into law on Feb. 17, 2009 by President Barack Obama granting $15,000 to veterans living in the States and $9,000 to Filipino veterans living in the Philippines.

Just as the news of lumpsum checks being received by veterans are announced publicly, many Filipino veterans' claims are also being denied quietly because they have no records of military service with the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) at St. Louis, Missouri.

Mr. G.V. was inducted into the US Armed Forces in the Far East on Nov. 17, 1941 when he was with the Infantry Regiment Philippine Commonwealth. He was a Death March survivor and was able to escape from prison. He subsequently joined the guerrilla forces. He last rank was with the Armed Forces of the Philippines. He received Honorable Discharge dated July 29, 1948.

Naturalized citizen

When the Immigration Act of 1990 was passed granting US citizenship to Filipino World War II veterans, Mr. GV applied for naturalization. His application was approved, and he was then sworn in as a US citizen in 1997.

On March 3, 2008, he applied for lump sum benefit but his claim was denied by the US-DVA because his name was not found in the NPRC.

In his letter, Mr. GV states that "I am so unfortunate to learn that I despised my loyal service to my country, fighting side by side with the American soldiers for the same cause of freedom then is of no exception. I also read in the news that 5th persons of the records in Missouri were burned in 1973, (the reason) our record in our service in the Armed Forces kind statement and consideration, I am asking for your help on what to do with my last record. I won't be surprised if I am not (declared) a genuine veteran of World War II."

IMFO
Leonides Sawian Tancinco

Verifying records

The problem encountered by this Filipino veteran represents the problems of a significant number of veterans who fought courageously during the war but have no actual service records on the list kept by St. Louis Missouri.

For more than half a century, there has never been a consistency in the policy with regards to how they are to be treated for purposes of benefits. When the lump sum benefit, or the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation, was passed early this year, many victorious celebrations were held as if the U.S. government to this issue had finally arrived.

After three months, however, several veterans who could not find their names on the Missouri list are having new legal obstacles.

"This is not the first time that the Missouri list was questioned for being an accurate source of military service. The issue on verification had been a consistent one for when the Philippine veterans' applications for naturalization were being processed in the 1990s.

The US Immigration and Naturalization Service (now the US Citizenship and Immigration Services) lost in the case of Zamora v. INS (9th Circuit 1994) and Sangalang v. US (9th Circuit 1998) when it limited the naturalization to veterans whose names were in the Missouri list.

Inaccurate Missouri list

In the dissent and Sangalang cases, the court ordered the INS to accept official Philippine government records instead of US Army records to prove military service for purposes of naturalization.

The Missouri list relied upon by the US Veterans Affairs does not contain accurate record of the services of Filipino World War II veterans.

Lt. Col. Edwin F. Ramsey a West Point graduate and commander of over 40,000 guerrilla troops in northern Philippines during World War II, testified during the trial in Alonzo case. He said that records listing the names of his troops were created under wartime conditions in which his men were greatly outnumbered by the occupying Japanese forces. According to him, his command emptied keeping a list when the list fell into the enemy hands and many of those named were executed.

Lump sum benefits

Ramsey said that he participated in the reconstruction of the list but nearly half of the Filipino service served under his command were "drawn from mind" by political reasons and their records eliminated. Other records were lost in a 1973 fire at the St. Louis Missouri center where the records were kept.

Since the courts ruled against limiting the list, the legislation on naturalization was amended in 1998. But this amendment practically excluded the rulings in Alonzo and Sangalang cases.

Unlike the amendments of the legislation on naturalization in 1998, the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation, the law does not limit the success of verifying military records to the Missouri list. Section 3(d) of Section 1002 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 clearly defines those groups that are eligible to receive lump sum benefits.

The Veterans Administration should not restrict the benefits of the less surviving veterans, especially if they can prove their service with documents from the executive department under which they served, including the Philippine government.

This great generation has been through a lot and has long been deprived of their just recognition. To limit granting the benefits to the Missouri list is again an inequitable denial of rights of the aging Filipino veterans, another injustice that must be immediately corrected.

Readers may be reached at dmag@inquirer.com.ph or 687-7177.

WORLD BRIEFS

Suu Kyi marks six years of latest detention

RANGOON—Aung San Suu Kyi marked the sixth anniversary of her latest period of detention on Saturday, as she awaits her trial under house arrest that has sparked international outrage. Despite a recent mob attack on her residence that left about 70 people dead, Suu has been held under house arrest since the incident near Depayin in northern Burma, but was moved to Rangoon's notorious Insein prison two weeks ago following fresh charges against her. The 63-year-old laureate of 15 of the past 19 years in detention and the new trial has drawn international outrage. AFP

Germany in deal with Magna, GM to save Opel

BERLIN—Germany reached a landmark deal with Canadian auto parts group Magna, General Motors and governments in save carmaker Opel from the imminent bankruptcy of its US parent, German leaders said on Saturday. Finance Minister Peer Steinbrueck told journalists visiting Chancellor Chancellor Angela Merkel's offices during the six-hour meeting that a comprehensive deal had been agreed on. "I can tell you that a deal has been reached," Steinbrueck said. He added that the deal included bridge financing for Opel worth 1.5 billion euros ($2.1 billion) and a trustee model for the German carmaker. Reuters

Big Ben rings in its 150th anniversary

LONDON—Daily the last part accurate in the second, Big Ben is keeping its 150th birthday on Sunday. Its Victorian chimes carrying the sound of Britain into the 21st century. It's a birthday the world can share in. The pride of London's Westminster clock are set but globally by BBC radio, across 86 meter tower, roughly 16 stories, is the city's most well-known landmark. In the age of atomic clocks, its near perfect time is regularly by hours old persons and on or removed from the pendulum. The minute, supposedly based on four notes from Handel's "Messiah," ring out every quarter hour from the noticeably ornamented belfry. The design of Big Ben itself is heard every hour. Carried on BBC radio since 1924, the chimes took on added significance in World War II. Every night Britons observed a minute's silence as the clock struck nine. It was called the Big Ben Minute. Over an German bombs fell and air raid sirens howled, Big Ben's voice was heard. AP

Iran hangs 3 over mosque blast

TEHRAN—IRAN ON SATURDAY HANGED three men in public accused of involvement in the bombing of a Shiite mosque that killed 25 people, an official said, branding them "terrorists" and "enemies of God."

The early morning executions took place near the mosque in southeastern Iran, denounced by the bombing, official IRNA news agency quoted Prosecutor Ebrahim Hamidi, justice chief of Sistan-Baluchestan province, as saying.

At least 125 people were also wounded in the powerful blast, which rocked the Amir al-Momenin mosque in the Sistan-Baluchestan provincial capital Zahedan during evening prayers on Thursday.

"The terrorists Rigi Nasr Ghi, Ghobrolezahi and Shokil Zehi and Zahibollah Hamed were hanged at 6 a.m. near the Amir al-Momenin mosque in public," Hamidi told IRNA.

"They confessed to illegally bringing explosives into Iran and giving them to the main person behind the bombing," he added.

"They were convicted of being inducted (enemies of God) and 'moharebeh' (waging war and acting against national security)," Hamidi said.

"They were arrested before the Thursday's bombing but they confessed that they had provided the explosives for the bombing. They were tried and they had court-appointed legal representatives."

He said the men had also been charged with "direct involvement in the bombing of a Sepah (Revolutionary Guard's) bus in 2007, the Al-Ghadir mosque and some other bombings."

"Sixteen Revolutionary Guards were killed in an attack on their bus in Zahedan in February 2007.

In February this year, a bomb apparently carried by a motorcyclist exploded in Zahedan's Al-Ghadir mosque complex but caused no casualties.

"This case is not over and the search will continue by the provincial police, intelligence and security and they will have the rest of them," Hamidi said.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Saturday issued a statement carried by Iranian media advising "elements in Sistan and Baluchestan to surrender the plots," and asking "the authorities to quickly find, punish and uproot the evil hands of foreigners who were behind the bombing."

He did not accuse any country.

On Friday Jalal Sayah, deputy governor of Sistan-Baluchestan, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, said that "three people involved with the terrorist incident were arrested."

"According to the information obtained they were hired by America and the agents of the arrogance," Sayah added.

Officials usually use the term "global arrogance" to refer to Iran's arch-foe the United States.

Interior Minister Sadeq Mahsouli also pointed the finger towards the United States and Israel.

US State Department spokesperson Ian Kelly denied emphatically that Washington was behind the attack, which it condemned "in the strongest possible terms."

"The US strongly condemns all forms of extremism. We do not sponsor any form of terrorism in Iran and we continue to work with the international community to try to prevent any attacks against innocent civilians anywhere," Kelly told reporters in Washington on Friday.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had on Friday urged restraint.

Iranian cleric "should once again express their firm stand in leashing the corrupt ones who commit such crimes in the name of defending Sunni adherents. (Mehr dailies) should prevent (loopholes and angry reactions)," he said. AFP

US: Nokor plans new missile launches

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—North Korea vowed to retaliate if punitive UN sanctions are imposed for its latest nuclear test, and US officials said there are new signs Pyongyang may be planning more long-range missile launches.

With tensions rising, the government nation guaranteed to hostage of threats with yet another short-range missile launch on Friday—the sixth this week.

Perhaps more significantly, officials in Washington said there are indications of increased activity at a site used to fire long-range missiles.

A South Korean newspaper reported on Saturday that US spy satellites detected engine tests North Korea preparing to launch a long-range missile from an armament factory near Pyongyang to its northeastern Musudan-ri. Recently, paid The conservative Donga Ilbo paper, citing an unidentified source in Washington, said it would take about 10 days by the North to move the missile to the pad by crane.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said it could not confirm the report. But a ministry official said the North transferred the long-range rocket it fired in April at the factory cited by the newspaper and transported it via train to Musudan-ri.

The US officials also said an initial US air sampling from near the underground test site was inconclusive.

Officials said the initial analysis doesn't prove the blast successfully completed an atomic reaction, at least one more test is coming.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency said the latest test launch on Friday was a surface-to-air missile for defense. AP

The WORLD

Cito Lorenzo B. Rotea

12 years of deadlock on nukes broken

GENEVA—THE 65-NATION CONFERENCE ON Disarmament broke a dozen years of deadlock on Friday and opened the way to negotiate a new nuclear arms control treaty.

Diplomats welcomed the adoption of a "program of work" in a breakthrough for the conference, which has been stalemated since it wrote the nuclear nonproliferation treaty in 1996.

The program refers to nuclear disarmament in general, but it addresses a top candidate for a new treaty to curb the production of so-called "fissile materials"—highly enriched uranium and plutonium—needed to create atomic weapons.

Ambassador Idris Jazairy of Algeria, who is chair of the conference packed his adoption of the program, said the breakthrough came in part because of support by the United States, France, Britain, Russia and China.

"It's a result," Britain Ambassador John Duncan wrote on Twitter. He credited Jazairy with "getting international work on nuclear disarmament restarted in Geneva."

North Korea, which conducted its first nuclear bomb, outlawed the program of work.

Ju Myong Hun, a diplomat with the North Korean delegation, told the conference, "The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has decided to support the draft decision in order for the conference to be able to start its substantive work."

This decision now makes even though the UN Security Council continues to criticize North Korea. An said, adding that moves to acquire a nuclear arsenal seem solely for self-defense.

He said it remains the country's policy to achieve total nuclear disarmament, but nuclear weapons states have to lead the way.

Iran, which has been accused of trying to develop nuclear weapons, said it had sent documents to Tehran, but had yet to receive instructions.

Gerald Larson, the head of the US delegation, joined in the praises for Jazairy and other ambassadors and said delegates were looking forward to the work, "which will surely be challenging."

The United States has long backed proposals for a fissile material treaty, but was cool at first to Jazairy's work. But he won it by drafting its position to support a verifiable accord.

President Barack Obama said in Prague, Czech Republic, last month, "The United States will seek a new treaty that verifiably ends the production of fissile materials intended for use in nuclear weapons."

On Friday Obama welcomed negotiations by the conference to open the way to negotiate a new nuclear arms control treaty. AP

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ LA in Finals
/A26

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CHRIS Ross of Pharma (middle), who was named Most Valuable Player of the current PBA tournament, nearly loses the ball during a scramble involving Rob Labagala (left) and Gerwin Koco (back) of Oracle and teammate Ronie Fajardo. AUGUST LUCAS/INQ

Titans near title

By Cedelf F. Tupas

AN ORACLE RESURGENCE SHOCKED cast a pall in the shadow of Mark Barroca all tournament long turned out yesterday as the Titans dominated the Phoenix Fuel Masters, 88-70, to grab a 2-1 series lead in the best-of-five PBA PG Fire Unity Cup at the Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig City.

Chris Timberlake ran rings around his defenders to score 19 points, mostly on layups, and Rob Labagala and Jolo Mendoza finished with 16 apiece as the Titans used a stunning second-half assault to move on the brink of nailing a seventh straight crown for the Mikee Romero-owned franchise.

"Our championship experience showed in this game," said Oracle coach Glenn Capacio. "Defensively, we were almost perfect in this game. I give credit to the guards, they really stepped up today."

With Barroca and the three other members of the Asians Cup 'B' roster back from a stint in Japan to boost the squad, the Titans ran away up the throats in Game 4 on Tuesday also at the Ynares Sports Arena.

"We're in a good position but we can't relax because we haven't achieved anything yet. I'm sure they'll prepare for Game 4," Capacio said.

SERIES TONIGHT
(Ynares Sports Arena)
Finale
5 p.m. — Phoenix vs Oracle

Willers turned out to be Capacio's trump card for Game 3.

Scoreless in the first two games, the 6-foot-2 guard hit 7 of 13 shots including two triples and grabbed 10 rebounds to help the Titans, who improved at almost every front after an 83-72 loss in Game 2 Thursday.

Ritz Hinterlechner contributed 12 points, collared 15 rebounds and blocked three shots after losing the Most Valuable Player award by a narrow margin to Chris Ross.

The Titans clogged the lane everytime the 6-foot-1 Ross drove to the basket and the Filipino-American guard missed nine of his 14 shots and committed six turnovers. He wound up with 16 points.

Oracle did not have to wait until the fourth quarter to put away the Governs. They surged to several 14-point leads in the third before succumbing to a 21 heading into the final two minutes.

The scores:

ORACLE 88 — Timberlake 19, Willers 11, Labagala 16, Mendoza 16, Cruz 5, Asoro 0, Fernando 5, Barroca 1, Sena 2

PHOENIX 70 — Ross 16, Bolon 12, Hinterlechner 12, Salenga 6, Lo 7, Mariano 7, Golla 2, Fuentes 2, Apacible 2, Abueva 2, Mahinay 0, —

Quarters: 18-11, 42-36, 70-54, 88-70

FIESTA Q'FINALS

Giants, Realtors slight picks

By Mycaeng B. Cuerdo

PERFORMANCE, PERFECTION AND SUBstance remained elusive, taken on Rain or Shine at the start of their quarterfinal series in the Metrolite PBA Fiesta Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Barako Bull Energy Cola Boys, who are still the depleted Elasto Painters at 5:30 p.m., heavily favored to score a follow-up to a 126-121 double-overtime win over Talk 'N Text two nights ago and move closer to other coach Ryan Gregorio desired as their "dream."

Barger King and Sta. Lucia collide earlier at 4 p.m. to open their own best-of-three quarterfinal series.

The Barges (Sta. Lucia misnomer will face elimination rejoinder Sta. Miguel Beer in one of two semifinal duels while the Purefoods-Star, or Otso superior will take on defending champion Sunkist Giants in the other Final four showdown.

The semifinal encounters will be a best-of-seven affair like the championship showdown.

The Realtors also needed to get past the Coca-Cola Tigers last Friday to reach the quarterfinals but they didn't go through the rightways set that the Giants went through.

"We didn't give up until the end and there were a lot of instances where we could have just rolled over and died," Gregorio said of Purefoods' thrilling victory.

CHAMPS Players and coaching staff of the Barangay Talk 'N Text-Quezon City wheep it up after ruling the Powerade Barangay PBA National Championship, joining the future stars as endorsements Coca-Cola PBA board representatives JB Baylon and PBA commissioner Rennald "Sonny" Barrios.

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National baseball stars out of Series V

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BASEBALL PHILIPPINES OFFICIALS yesterday suspended all 24 members of the Philippine team who are playing for the league of baseball Philippines offseason tournament during the Series V games last weekend.

Organizers issued a memorandum to the team members informing them of the indefinite suspension of the PH players for skipping the May 23-24 games which were essential in deciding the team standings going into the playoffs.

"In view of preserving the integrity and viability of the league and all stakeholders and general public, we have decided that the players are indefinitely suspended from participating in the games of Baseball Philippines effective immediately," the memo said.

Among those affected are Cebu ace Joseph Orillosa, Olongapo's Darwin dela Cabada, Manila's Charlie Labrador and Batangas' Vic Bustos.

SERIES STOP (Final Schedule)
Finals—Starting on Sunday (6)
PCR Vols.—Cebu vs Batangas (Game 1, Saturday)
Cebu—Olongapo vs Manila, if necessary
Title—Opposite vs Batangas

The national players have not spoken regarding the issue but sources said they were unhappy that BP organizers had accused them of playing below par in sympathy with Philippine Amateur Baseball Association president Hector Navasero.

Navasero was supposed to step down last April and endorsed his deputy Ely Bandao as his successor, but the polls were postponed when BP officials led by Chito Loyzaga and Lolito Tanseco protested, citing the absence of election procedures.

The same sources said the BP players also lamented the fact that they only play with their respective home cities or twice a week and didn't have enough time to bleed with their teammates.

Meanwhile, the game between Cebu and Olongapore promises that wins count for today due to inclement weather.

The Dolphins, who hold a 4-4 mark, are aiming to end their three-game skid against the Usd-fifteen (2-6).

If Cebu beats Olongapore, the Stallions will battle the Manila Sharks today in the resumption of their suspended game last May 23 where they fought to a 19-19 deadlock 13 innings.

Giants alive on sheer will

THERE WAS HARDLY ANY INDICATION of the harrowing double overtime game between Pamilacdi and Talk 'N' Text which ended close to 11 p.m. last Friday afternoon.

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

Eli-mits coach Ryan Gregorio entertained the press room of the Ateneo Celiseum for the postgame interview with every ounce of his sorely groomed hair still in place, his shirt remaining immaculately tucked and his bow untouched.

Most of the papers did not carry an account of the game the following day because it ended way past the deadline, but surprisingly Ryan was welcomed by a good-sized audience. Last Wednesday, the press room was almost empty when Bonger King coach Seng Guanco came in for the usual interview.

Ryan admitted it was truly a most exhausting match both physically and mentally.

* * *

"What was hard to bear was the constant changing of emotions. It was like a rollercoaster ride. First we lost our import in regulation. Then we missed our free throw for potential game-winning. Four-point plays. We led by 12 in the first overtime, only to lose it in 3:55. In the second overtime, we fanned ourselves praying hard for Roger Yap to convert the two free throws that would tie the game. By sheer determination, we prevailed," recounted Ryan, who gave credit to the persistence as much as he did for the victory.

"To be involved in a classic game of that nature is truly incredible," he added.

How does he see the quarterfinals series against Rain or Shine?

"Historically, Rain or Shine is a tough matchup against us. In fact, in the last six games, we only won once. But we still find ways to overcome their strengths. With the semis seat as the prize, I am sure everyone in our team will be determined to win whatever the odds are. The will is more important than the skill," said Ryan.

* * *

Responding to the inquiries of wining aficionados, I immediately touched base with Alaska executive director Ed Picson to find out what his plans are for this year's franchise at Asian Games which will be held in Laos.

Ed, who is now devoting all his time and energy to amateur boxing, disclosed that a highly competitive lineup will be formed after an extensive selection process in tournaments here and abroad.

"We are confident that with our history, skill and dedication, we will be able to put a force to reckon with. Our immediate mandate formation of the team with afternoons by July. Then they will have to go some extensive training. They should peak by the time the SEA Games comes around," Ed explained.

No, there will be no repeat of the virtual Sakhaw Kazakstan surrender in 2007.

"We intend to fight to the end," he said.

* * *

HOOPVIEW: The Scuba shenanigans in Medan, Indonesia, is down to four teams following the pullout of Thailand and Laos. Instead of a one-round robin affair, the competitors involving Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and the Philippines, will also have a championship round. The top two teams will qualify for the Fiba-Asia Men's Championship in Tianjin, China, this August ... In a morning held in Geneva, Switzerland, recently, the Fiba Central Board approved the reinstatement of former BBP secretary general Tiatchan Lim to the Youth Commission. According to the report e-mailed to us, the meeting was attended by Fiba president Jeb Ephinomo and secretary-general Patrick Baumann.

Pulpul gains semis

De Luna keeps 10-ball title aspirations alive

By Cedell P. Tupas

THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF AUSPICIOUS performances from Filipinos in the Philippine Open 10-Ball Pool Championships.

Darwinterbon Pulpul remained perfect in five games and banged into the semifinals yesterday even as compatriot Jeffrey De Luna bundled out one of the bigger names in the sport to keep his title hopes alive at the SM Megamall Megatrade Hall 2 in Mandaluyong City.

Pulpul, who rose to prominence after smashing the semifinals of the Predator 10-Ball Championships, continued his success with the finest players in the western division as he bested former world champion Rolly Hitter 9-2, before **clinching his place in the semifinals by** dominating 11-1 Hot-shots of Chinese Taipei, 9-4.

"I have been a little lucky in this tournament," said Pulpul, who sopped compatriot Mario Valentino, 9-4, Thursday night.

Relishing his role as an underdog, De Luna, who was relegated to the lesser **bracket by Taiwanese ace Chang Pei-an** Thursday ousted current World No. 1 Ralf Souquet of Germany, 9-5, and reigning World 10-Ball champion Dang-ren Appleton of Britain, 9-6, last night to **remain in contention.**

On the hill and breaking in the 17th, De Luna left the table open when he miscalculated his approach shot on the red three. Appleton, however, scratched after making the orange five, allowing De Luna to bend the victory and advance shutdown with Robin are Rodolfo Bihina.

"I was playing without pressure," said De Luna, who **eliminated** Oliver Dominguez, 9-4, in the last 16 of the lower bracket.

The winner of the De Luna-Bihina match scheduled late last night will face Pulpul in the semifinals at 11 a.m. today. **The championship match is set at 7 p.m.**

Ricky Yang of Indonesia seized the second semifinal slot with a 9-7 decision over Bihina. Yang earlier beat Chang Pei-wei, 9-2, in the last night of the winners' bracket.

Yang will face other American Corey Deuel and Taiwanese Lo Hsi-chun, who were playing as premium. Deuel earned competitor Shane 'the' Bowling, 9-4, in the losers' bracket. Hsi-chun Wenshi lowered out after losing to Antonio Gabica, 4-9. Gabica, who lost to Marcio Chamat, 2-9, Thursday, was ousted by Appleton, 8-9, yesterday.

DEMOS THEMES Pulpul takes careful aim in his match against Rolly Pichter

Bitoon, Paragua, Laylo boost Subic Open drive

PARAGUA

Standings after seven rounds
6 points—2. Grant Stephen Cruz; 3-4...; 5. Jonathan Tolog; 6. Antonio Magpantay; 7-8...; 9. Ricky Yang; 10. Chang Pei-wei; 11. Lo Hsi-chun; 12. Jeffrey De Luna; 13. Darwinterbon Pulpul; 14. Marcio Chamat; 15. Carlo Biado; 16. Antonio Gabica; 17. Oliver Dominguez; 18. Ralf Souquet; 19. Dang-ren Appleton; 20. Shane Bowling; 21. Corey Deuel; 22. Rodolfo Bihina; 23. Mario Valentino; 24. Rolly Pichter; 25. Hideaki Kawamura; 26. Hsu Chien-ming; 27. Chang Pei-an; 28. Hsu Chien-ming; 29. Hsu Chien-ming; 30. Hsu Chien-ming; 31. Hsu Chien-ming; 32. Hsu Chien-ming; 33. Hsu Chien-ming; 34. Hsu Chien-ming; 35. Hsu Chien-ming; 36. Hsu Chien-ming; 37. Hsu Chien-ming; 38. Hsu Chien-ming; 39. Hsu Chien-ming; 40. Hsu Chien-ming; 41. Hsu Chien-ming; 42. Hsu Chien-ming; 43. Hsu Chien-ming; 44. Hsu Chien-ming; 45. Hsu Chien-ming; 46. Hsu Chien-ming; 47. Hsu Chien-ming; 48. Hsu Chien-ming; 49. Hsu Chien-ming; 50. Hsu Chien-ming; 51. Hsu Chien-ming; 52. Hsu Chien-ming; 53. Hsu Chien-ming; 54. Hsu Chien-ming; 55. Hsu Chien-ming; 56. Hsu Chien-ming; 57. Hsu Chien-ming; 58. Hsu Chien-ming; 59. Hsu Chien-ming; 60. Hsu Chien-ming; 61. Hsu Chien-ming; 62. Hsu Chien-ming; 63. Hsu Chien-ming; 64. Hsu Chien-ming; 65. Hsu Chien-ming; 66. Hsu Chien-ming; 67. Hsu Chien-ming; 68. Hsu Chien-ming; 69. Hsu Chien-ming; 70. Hsu Chien-ming; 71. Hsu Chien-ming; 72. Hsu Chien-ming; 73. Hsu Chien-ming; 74. Hsu Chien-ming; 75. Hsu Chien-ming; 76. Hsu Chien-ming; 77. Hsu Chien-ming; 78. Hsu Chien-ming; 79. Hsu Chien-ming; 80. Hsu Chien-ming; 81. Hsu Chien-ming; 82. Hsu Chien-ming; 83. Hsu Chien-ming; 84. Hsu Chien-ming; 85. Hsu Chien-ming; 86. Hsu Chien-ming; 87. Hsu Chien-ming; 88. Hsu Chien-ming; 89. Hsu Chien-ming; 90. Hsu Chien-ming; 91. Hsu Chien-ming; 92. Hsu Chien-ming; 93. Hsu Chien-ming; 94. Hsu Chien-ming; 95. Hsu Chien-ming; 96. Hsu Chien-ming; 97. Hsu Chien-ming; 98. Hsu Chien-ming; 99. Hsu Chien-ming; 100. Hsu Chien-ming

SUBIC—FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL MASter Rolland Bitoon held Asian Continental champion Grandmaster Surya Shekhar Ganguly of India to a draw in the seventh round to stay in contention for a GM result in the 2009 Subic Open international chess championship at the Subic Exhibition and Convention Center Friday.

Despite handling black, Bitoon forced the top-seeded Ganguly to split the point, putting him in the company of countryman GM Mark Paragua and Darwin Laylo entering the final two rounds of the tournament organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines headed by Prospero "Bosch" Pichay.

The 34-year-old Bitoon, Paragua and Laylo have 6.5 points each as they trailed solo leader GM Efren Elimeri Mogbel of Iran by 0.5 points and GM Chanda Sandipan of India and GM Zaw Sabmar of Bangladesh by a point.

Paragua bested countryman Jony Hebb while Laylo drew with Tei Kung Sing of China to share 11th to 21st places with Bitoon and seven foreigners in the $50,000-event supported by the Department of Tourism, Digest, PCSO and Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Mogbel dumped Gift Das Three Hai of Vietnam to remain his fifth win against two draws. Sandipan beat countryman GM Abhijit Kunte while Sabmar nipped Xie Dedmon of China to share 5.5 points. Judged in 3.5 points were Indian GM Ratnapalan Nagi and Indonesian GM Susanto Megaranto. **Ray Lustro**

Air Force, UP batters tally wins

DEFENDING MEN'S CHAMPION Air Force and women's titlist University of the Philippines notched contrasting victories at the start of the 2009 Ateneo Lucille Natural Open softball championship yesterday in opposite venues.

The Airmen needed only four innings to crush Olongapo City, 12-2, at the Ronnie Ilarde Complex grounds in Pasig City.

But the Lady Maroons had to struggle before subduing the Adamson-Manila Lady Falcons, 9-1, under steady downpour at the Blue Eagle softball field in Marikina City. Organizers suspended the rest of the opening schedule in both venues due to the soggy ground.

Filoil Technological University from Intramuros also came through, 3-1, in the other completed ninth game at the Ronaldo Complex. At the Sto. Niño field, Dasmariñas City-based St. Louis University of Baguio, 17-1, in three innings while the Legends of Sherpaage crushed UE-Baguio, 11-2.

PCR-Tough Gear reaps big harvest

RIVERA

PCR-TOUGH GEAR RACING EMERGED THE winningest team recently in the third leg of the 2009 Magnolia Super Karting Series at the Kart Zone in Cebu.

The new kids on the block bested all other teams with their harvest of six wins, two runner-ups and a third place finish with the support of Ivan C. Chiu Fibre Services Inc., Leo-ssay Travel and Tours, Hayward International Inc., Confidence Shipping Company Manila Inc., Migarth, Golf Sky and PCR-Indy.

Rookie Esteban Rivera earned the winning streak, clinching the Formula SL Senior crown against Cebu homegrown talents Tonyo Gavril and Arlo Calderon.

Rivera led start-to-finish wire to wire in the 20-lap race in 12 minutes and 33.621 seconds, 0.323 seconds ahead of Gavril. Rivera earned third overall in the title race with 134 points.

Gian Cebuano barrel Ben Rodriguez notched new lap records for PCR-Tough Gear, spinning forth the Formula SL Heavy and the Formula SL Expert crowns.

Rodriguez made it a 1-2 finish in the Formula SL Expert class with Vi Sotto and turned back fellow Cebuano Derick Gauthiers and MTD Racing Bikes #6 in the Formula SL Heavy division.

PCR-Tough Gear team owner Fanny Rivera credited her team's big improvement to the acquisition of long-time racer and former Asian Formula 3 driver Nilgeh Dy-Liacco, who swapped the kids with advanced techniques and proper motivation as manager-coach.

Arcano, Gonzales rule Herma Group

THE INQUIRER GOLF MAGAzine's living Arcano fired a one-over 36-hole total to win the Top 50 Invitational by one shot at Sonny Sonnet's Wack Wack's West course in Mandaluyong.

Arcano finished hole Nos. 1-1 and 1-9 for a gross of 66 to slip two-over Teresa Rabino Jun Eugenio by a shot with Philippine Blue open's author Lito Tacapao finishing fourth with a level 72. Manong Castillo, also of the hooters, was fourth with a 73.

Defense secretary and last presidential candidate Gilbert 'Gibo' Teodoro was the tournament's guest of honor and was on hand to help organizer, sportsman-businessman Hermie Esguerra, award the prizes to the winners.

Dexie Gonzales, sports director editor of the Inquirer, and Delfin Jerez of the Manila Bulletin, ruled Class B and C after fixing rounds of 75 and 79, respectively. Mon Tinsay, also of the Standard retrieved a 78, and was second to Gonzales.

Teddy-ess Melendres, the Inquirer sports editor, was runner-up to Perez with a net 61.

More than 30 players coming from various newspaper beats took part in the 18-hole event as media got the chance to know Teodoro more.

RP International tenpin bowling on

By Mari Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL tournaments, the country's top bowlers among ten nations yesterday at the start of the 36th Philippine International tenpin bowling championships at the Boeing's Midtown Hotel in Makati.

More than 2000 world men's champion Biboy Rivera has entered the big field of veterans and newcomers in the tournament where he is pursuing his 5th record Masters title.

Also making part in the two-week event are World Women's Championship-bound Liza del Rosario, Liza Clozario, Applee Posadas, Kim Lee, Bianca Ebinez and Rachel de Leon. They are set to compete in Las Vegas in July.

Del Rosario, a three-time Masters champion here, will also join Clozario Ring in the World Games Bowling in Chinese Taipei also in July.

"We have high hopes in this tournament," said Philippine Bowling Congress secretary general, Ruth of Nuno Bong Cos.

She was earlier lectured to the bowling body along with new PBC officials led by president Mary Tanoyo and executive vice president James Dychiaco.

Supporting the elite BP team are Marcelo King, Paolo Valdez, Ramon Custodio, Frederick Ong, Jerad Bellazar, John Co, Jeff Canadoo, Jeffe Cabangon, Louie Clemente and last year's champ Benedict Lapena in the men's competition.

PBC president Ami "Bejing" Cojuangco was a special guest of the opening ceremonies. Sherry Angeles of the tournament Philippine Sports Commission skipped the opening because of a prior commitment but vowed to support the tournament.

COJUANGCO-Special guest

Giants . . .

From page A10

"Teams made up of lesser material would have stumbled," added, noting that the Giants' biggest scare was the final 3:50 of the fourth period. "But because of our big fighting hearts, we still have a chance to make our dreams (of winning the championship) come true."

Going by three with six seconds to go in regulation, Puentevella was able to forge extension when Archie Raymundo scored on a desperate-straight and drawing a foul in time.

But the Giants failed to win the game outright when he failed to complete the free-point play. Curiously, it was his only miss from 10-for-three attempts in the game.

And when the Giants had taken a 12-point lead with 7:45 left in the first extension, Talk 'N' Text came alive by hitting four straight baskets to cut the deficit. Frank Ren-Ren Pingcan that all came from almost 30 feet away—as the Tropang Texters forged another overtime.

Pumbroth then needed to erase a three-point deficit inside the last 36 seconds of the second extension, a deficit which was made possible after Raymundo threw up three ill-advised jumpers that didn't come close to going in.

But while he has a hard squad that will not shake in the face of adversity, he needs to work on the fighting heart of import Marquis Chandler, who played such a bad game that he finished out with only 5-for-16 left in the fourth.

"He definitely struggled a lot," Gregorio said of Chandler, who had just 12 points in Talk's crucial contest. "I'll be sitting down with him tomorrow. I just have to sit down and talk to him to tell him that his heads failed him now."

Nate or Blaze will play with a handicap of sorts, as leading local scorer, rookie point guard Solomon Mercado, will sit out the contest because of a criminal right hamstring suffered in the third quarter game win over Barako Bull on Wednesday.

The Bolts are also the slight picks over the Whoppers mainly because of Anthony Johnson, who showed why he's the best import in the lot with 42 points and 20 rebounds against the Tigers.

Against the Whoppers, Johnson might even be required to post bigger numbers since Kelly Williams will continue to sit out this series.

National team outrigger Jewel Santos and the prolific Gary David will lead the Whoppers, while Johnson will get help from a battery of veterans like Dennis Espino, Marlou Aquino and Beau Onrubia.

FUEL FOODIE, which will be led by Marquis Chandler, will try to ride the momentum of a big win when it opens its quarterfinal bid today.

AdU Falcons rout Archers; Bulldogs win

ADAMSON OUTCLASSED LA SALLE, 83-65, yesterday and topped Group B with six straight wins in the PCCAI-Flying V-sponsored MVP Cup at the Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Falcons, who finished their eliminations schedule with a 6-1 record, were in control throughout and led, 75-51, midway in the 4th quarter.

Leo Cornelio rekindled a game-high 14 points for Adamson, which posted a second win in three games vs LaSalle.

"The game plan was to really dictate the tempo of the game," said Adamson coach Leo Austria.

Earlier, National U finally broke into the win column by downing Mapua, 79-60, behind Ajose Ilaogbe's 20 points.

Ilaogbe shot 17 points in the second half to help the Bulldogs end their five-game skid.

NU sought fire in the final period to post a commanding 71-59 advantage at the 3:01 mark.

Sophomore guard Alino Mingolito tallied 16 points for the Cardinals, who ended their elimination round campaign with a 3-4 slate. Mark Gonopio, Cooperative ...

Clash of the titans in Shakey's V-League today

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS AND San Sebastian dispute the top seeding in the semifinals today while defending champion Adamson goes for a shot at the Final Four on the penultimate day of the sixth Shakey's V-League quarterfinals at the PhilSports Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Lady Tigers will put their 10-game winning streak on the line against the Tigresses, who outlasted San Sebastian, 25-17, 25-19, 21-25, 13-25, 15-13, on opening day. That was the only loss the Lady Stags suffered this entire tournament.

San Sebastian gained up for the drawdown with a 25-22, 25-16, 25-17 victory over the Montes/12, while UST came from behind to dump University of St. La Salle, 23-25, 25-13, 25-14, 25-17.

The two teams are tied on top with identical 4-0 records.

Adamson, which owns a 1-2 record, looks to complete the semifinal cast with a victory over reeling University of San Jose Recoletos at 2 p.m.

A win by the defending champions will render the last quarterfinalists on Tuesday nonbearing. UST has its first three games and must win over Adamson to stay alive for a playoff for the last semifinal seat.

UST-16 lost its first three games and must win over Adamson to stay alive for a playoff for the last semifinal seat.

That Jeremiah Banks, Symbolic Universities and Colleges Athletic Association and Lyceum of the Philippines University of Manila, Jhun Baldo, Michelle Cambos and Alex Mateo.

SPORTSWATCH

Tio-Valmoja paces JH Invitational

ROMEO TIO AND JIMMY VALMOJA COMBINED FOR 88 POINTS to grab the lead in the opening division at the start of the sixth Camp John Hay invitational golf tournament at John Hay Golf Club in Baguio City over the weekend.

Tio shot 41 points while Valmoja made 38 under the Modified Stableford scoring system to post a two-point lead over Jon Kerr Wood and Ruel Mari-ao, who had a pair of 39s for a 178.

Cato Austin and Gary Cruz took third place with a 15-after identical 36 points.

William Campos (40) and Sonny Mangubat (40) came through with 80 points to wrest a three-point lead over the Basset Bruce-Charles Bagdali pair (80) in Class B.

The 36-hole tournament spread over three days drew a stellar field of over 200 players composed of club members and their guests.

Forest Hills tops WGAP 2nd leg

FOREST HILLS PROVED NO GRACIOUS HOST AS IT DEFEATED the Class A crown while playing third in Class C at home in the second leg of the Women's Golf Association of the Philippines (WGAP) circuit recently.

Mi Hee Kwak Kim came away with 42 points under the Modified Stableford scoring system at the Forest Hills Golf Club in Baguio to lead the host squad to clinch on the 10-to-play, four-to-count tournament featuring the country's top lady golfers from the provincial clubs in the land.

Grace Mendoza made 40 points while Tess Stack and Lily Young chipped in 36 and 34 points, respectively, as Forest Hills posted a 152 in Class B to beat Tagaytay Highlands by two points.

The Highlanders drew 41 points from Wally Sze, who was the individual title.

Fernandez golf at Club Intramuros

CLUB INTRAMUROS, THE PAR-60 COURSE LOCATED BY THE heart of Manila, will host the second Anthony Fernandez Memorial Day in honor of its former manager on June 6.

The fund-raising tournament aims to pool funds to continue some of Fernandez' projects while he was overseeing management of the challenging layout, among them, the welfare of the caddies.

Tickets for the 18-hole event are now available at the club's office. Those interested may contact the telephone numbers 5270613, 5261351 or cel. number 09184000000.

Handsome trophies will be up for grabs in the tournament with valuable appliances to be drawn in the raffle during the awarding ceremonies.

US kids RP tourney tomorrow

Pinoy Europe champ Palanca joins field

PALANCA Champion

PHILIPPE VERSETT PALANCA, WHO RECENTLY conquered the European junior circuit, will be among the more than 120 kids who will see action in the first ever Philippine qualifying round of the US Kids Golf World Championship kids.

The 7-year-old Filipino recently made waves when he topped the US Kids European championship in Kristianstad, Sweden, beating 31 other champions from around the world in his division.

Palanca is expected to draw a major share of the spotlight in the tournament put together by Great Depot, Inc., the official distributor of US Kids Golf in the country, and the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines for boys and girls from ages 5 to 18.

The player to each age and gender group who earns the scoring requirement will be invited to compete in the US Kids Golf World Championship set in Augusta, Georgia, from August 6 to 8.

The top five finishers of each age and gender group will receive a medal for their accomplishments.

"We are very excited about this," says Jo Mendoza, Philippine brand manager of USKG. "It is the first time that the Philippines will be holding such a prestigious event for our junior golfers from all around the country."

Aside from the two separate competitions, next for the regular US Kids World Championship for ages 12 and below and the other for US Kids Teen Championship for ages 13 to 18 years.

"The golfing population is getting older and there is a need for young golfers to make their mark and grow the game," she added.

Olympic champs due for FDG/Partners Cup

THE HOST TO KOREAN NATIONAL stars will showcase its talent and skills before local fans as it competes in the 16th FDG/Partners Cup Invitational Basketball tournament on June 6 at the Ynares Sudecomm courts at the Library Center.

Led by the world No. 2 and Olympic Champion mauler Jong-Sung Hwangbo, Lee Kang-dae and Lee Hyo-Jung, the much Korean squad will play a series of exhibition games with the country's top players in the FDG Cup.

The 20-player Korean contingent also includes members of the men's team that captured the silver medal in the recent Sudirman Cup in Guangzhou, China.

The FDG Cup is held in honor of Frederick Go, president of Nobleman Land.

Meanwhile, a limited field of 160 players will clash for cop honors in the 16th edition of the Partners Cup title of the event also staged to foster camaraderie among the management and staff of Nobleman Land Corp.

Sunday SPORTS

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LA in Finals

KOBE Bryant and the Los Angeles Lakers earn one more shot at the NBA trophy.

DENVER, COLORADO—KOBE BRYANT scored 33 points to guide the Los Angeles Lakers back to the NBA Finals with a 119-92 rout of the Denver Nuggets on Friday, as the visitors closed out their Western Conference series in style.

Bryant added 10 assists while teammates Pau Gasol and Lamar Odom had 20 points apiece in one of the most complete post-season outings for the Lakers, who triumphed, 4-3, in the best-of-seven series.

"We had that effort and the emotions to match [tonight]," Bryant told reporters after finishing his ninth career NBA Finals appearance and second straight.

"It's been a physical march back to the finals. We're back to the place where we didn't finish our business last year.

"Hopefully we do it this year."

The Lakers, who were beaten by the Boston Celtics in last year's title showdown, await the winner of the Eastern Conference finals series between the Orlando Magic and Cleveland Cavaliers.

Denver's Carmelo Anthony had a team-high 28 points while shooting just 6-for-17 from the field and 10 fourth-[illegible]-19 points for the Nuggets, who struggled out of the gate and never recovered.

Los Angeles had difficulty closing out the Houston Rockets in the semifinals but showed clear focus from the outset against Denver, while shooting 57 percent from the field and a perfect 24-for-24 from the free throw line en route to the blowout win.

Bryant scored 11 points in the final 3:09 of the first half as Los Angeles took a 53-40 halftime lead and quickly pushed the advantage to 20 during the third quarter.

"We saved our best game for last," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said. "We had the momentum almost from the beginning of the game.

"We played well—shooting the ball well from all spots on the floor, and I thought our energy was good."

The Nuggets can look back at a strong season despite the defeat, the team bolstered by an early-season trade for point guard Chauncey Billups, who helped them to an NBA franchise best 54-regular season wins.

Denver's trip to the conference finals also broke a string of five straight first-round playoff defeats.

"Today is a tough day but it's been absolutely the best year I've been a part of," Billups said.

"Being able to help this team turn the corner has been awesome. I never would've imagined it."

The Lakers will be appearing in their 30th NBA Finals as a franchise and will try to make amends for last season's failure, when they were outgunned 4-2 by a dominant Celtics. Reuters

MARIA Sharapova's upstream of jubilation after surviving Yaroslava Shvedova.

PARIS—VENUS WILLIAMS WAS ELIMINATED from the French Open on Friday, losing in the third round of the clay-court major for the third straight year.

The thirt-seeded Williams, who reached the 2002 final at Roland Garros, lost in No. 29 ageee Szavay of Hungary 6-4, 6-4 it was only the 11th time in 162 career matches that Williams lost a set at two.

"I'm used to beating people 6-0," Williams said. "I'm not used to my shot not going in and losing a set 6-4, so it completely was foreign ground for me."

The seven-time Grand Slam champion was playing for the third straight day Shvedova second three-setters in win her first and second rounds, and renews match point against Lucie Safarova on Thursday.

"I had a lot of struggles out there, and sometimes you get to play well," Williams said. "Today it just didn't come together for me."

Maria Sharapova and her injured right shoulder managed to earn yet another three-set win. The unseeded Russian lost the first set but rebounded to beat Yaroslava Shvedova of Kazakhstan, 1-6, 6-2, 6-4, and advance to the fourth round.

"I dug a nice pothole for myself down, so many times and so many mistakes," Sharapova said. "There got rid of those errors and started playing better."

Defending champions Ana Ivanovic and Rafael Nadal had little trouble in their matches, both dominating their opponents. Top-seeded Dinara Safina also won easily in the women's draw.

Nadal defeated former No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt, 6-1, 6-3, 6-2, and Ivanovic beat Iveta Benesova of the Czech Republic, 6-0, 6-2.

"Always a win against Lleyton is very good news," said Nadal, who was trying to become the only person to win the straight French Open titles. "We count he playing well."

Ivanovic, who lost in the 2007 French Open final before winning last year, has committed only eight games since being taken to a comeback in her opening match.

"[The] score doesn't indicate how hard I had to work for some points," said Ivanovic, a finalist in '07. "She started playing much, much better in the second set, and started hitting the ball much heavier. I just played really good and stayed in the moment and did what I had to do out there."

Safina, the women's No. 1, defeated Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia, 6-2, 6-0.

Safina, trying to win her first Grand Slam title after losing in the final at Roland Garros last year and in the Australian Open final this year, has lost only four games in three rounds. AP

Business Features Editor: Margie Quimpo-Espino

Sunday BIZ

Mobile Alert: [illegible] E-mail: [illegible] Website: [illegible]

STORE manager Shirley Sison-Mordeo (left) shows Sto. Barbara Mayor Reynaldo Velasco (center) and Villasis Vice Mayor Nilda Corsiles a list of the products on display at the Pangasinan Publishing Center.

'Pasalubong' center rises in Pangasinan

Text and photos by Gabriel Cardinoza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

ROSALES, PANGASINAN—THERE'S now a place where all Pangasinan products can be found and bought.

It's called Pangasinan Pasalubong Center and it's an integrality located at Barangay Carmen East here, just a hundred meters from a newly opened shopping mall.

"This is the first store of its kind in Pangasinan," said store manager Shirley Sison-Mordeo.

Opened for business in March this year, the store sells famous Pangasinan products such as: Binpiran bonchon bangus (milkfish), Lingayen Augong (salted fish) and Calasiao puto (rice cake).

Dried fish from coastal towns of Dasol and San Fabian and pickled and dried mangoes processed in Mangatarem are also available.

Meanwhile from Baguio City and other Northern Luzon provinces have been dropping by to buy pasalubong so they won't have to leave Manila and other places south of Pangasinan.

"The most sought after products so far are the boneless bangus, bagoong, puto, pickled mangoes and peanut brittle," Mordeo said.

Pangasinan is the country's leading producer of bangus and mangoes, supplying 41 percent of the country's total production.

Palm-making, meanwhile, is a century-old home-based industry in the town of Calasiao.

The center was established as a project of the Pangasinan provincial government, Rosales municipal government and the Diman party-list.

"This was in response to Governor (Amado) Espino's call to boost all Pangasinan products under one roof," Mordeo said. "And we did exactly what he envisioned."

The products are supplied by small entrepreneurs from the different towns and cities of the province.

PICKLED mango from Mangatarem

Other products include dulce (black plum) wine from Dasol and Bugallon towns, muscovado sugar from Mapandan and preserved meat from Binmaley.

To make the area more attractive to travelers, the provincial government provided a wide parking area beside the store and constructed a restroom.

A stall fronting the store was also turned into a colorful mural depicting agricultural activities in Pangasinan.

PEANUT BRITTLE from Mangaldan (below) bags made of palm leaves from Agno

One artist's labor bears fruit

DON ROBERTO'S Wine products have caught the attention of local and international buyers.

By Karen Lapitan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

IMUS, CAVITE—ART connoisseur Roberto Castañeda wanted to promote Filipino culture in a different way when he thought of putting up a business in 2000.

While music and culture advocates make use of theater, visual arts and literary pieces to promote culture, Castañeda says wine as his own way of helping Filipinos—culturally and economically.

With P200,000, he formally started Don Roberto's Winery as sole proprietorship in 2001 after a year of planning, research and experimentation.

From sole proprietorship, the winery became Don Roberto's Winery Corp. after experiencing a year of growth and success in the field of wine production.

Music and music people got interested in the business since it offered unique products.

Don Roberto's Wine is known worldwide for its products: Ripe mango wine, green mango wine and the wine can be launched howard coffee wine.

"The main aim of the business is for us to be known as the first producer of mango and coffee wine in the world," Castañeda told the business.

"We also want to enrich the global wine culture with unique, exotic and exquisite mango and coffee wine."

Starting the winery

Castañeda is a Business Administration graduate who later pursued a career in culture and arts. At some point, he was part of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, where he served as one of its performing artists.

He was also affiliated with the Centro Cultural de España.

Although he was deep into the promotion of culture and arts, particularly music, his interest in business never wavered. From time to time, he would engage in family business ventures.

In 2000, before he thought of running a winery business, he was planning to put up his own restaurant in Baguio.

ROBERTO Castañeda continues to improve his products while promoting local mango and coffee industries in the international market.

For six months, he stayed in the Cordillera where he engaged in the arts, as well as charity work.

He was invited to coach in a resort, where he also served as banquet supervisor. Later, he ventured a religious-material production there.

The idea of starting a winery came while he was staying in the resort.

"I really have this passion for cooking, and my interest was caught when I saw a man in the community making wine out of strawberry and pamelia," Castañeda recalled.

He asked the man how he could make his own wine.

At first, the man was hesitant because the renovation man said to be a 300-year-old secret Belgian recipe.

"But out of gratitude, the man eventually told me how to make fruit wine on condition that I wouldn't tell anyone how the fruit wines are made," said Castañeda.

When he returned to his hometown of Imus, he tried to team all there went to Davao about fruit wines, hoping to develop his own version which would be different from what the man had taught him.

"One night, I was watching a news program on TV where the 2001 Cebu Mango Congress was featured," Castañeda recalled.

He thought some mangoes the day after, having decided to promote local mangoes on his own.

Starting the business was never easy as Castañeda literally had to go places to learn more about fruit wines, specifically mango wine.

Before he decided to start his winery, he went to Okango Colony and Davao to study wine-making.

"The preparation process took me a year so I didn't want to introduce a product below [par]," said Castañeda, who considered research and development to be a crucial phase in the winery business.

After some experimentation, he turned his house to Imus from a winery, where he initially produced 200 cans of wine.

Soon after, Castañeda had to move to a larger winery because of the surprising growth in demand for ripe and green mango wine abroad.

Systematic

Castañeda had set out not only to promote Filipino culture globally but to help other entrepreneurs as well.

He ensured that other people would also benefit from the success of the business, thus, he imposed a systematic way of outsourcing due would benefit not just one mango supplier.

From January to June, Don Roberto's Winery Corp. would get its mangoes from producers in Luzon. From July to December, mangoes from Visayas and Mindanao producers would be delivered.

In addition, the coffee used in the development of the brewed coffee wine came from Cavite.

The coffee wine will be launched in June.

"Even ordinary coffee peddlers in Cavite benefit from this business," said Castañeda. "From ordinary peddlers to high-end wine distributors, our winery is doing its part to providing opportunities for many people."

Globally competitive

Castañeda admitted that one of the challenges of his business is product familiarity among potential buyers.

But Don Roberto's Ripe Mango and Green Mango wine has been recognized internationally already

SEE OWNERS ON

'Health is wealth' takes on whole new meaning

By Karen Lapitan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—Health buffs are in for a treat when they swing by a new dining place here.

Herb Republic, which opened on April 22 in time for Earth Day, is a restaurant concept not only with the food it serves, but also the health and lifestyle of its patrons.

Owned by the Parras brothers—Herbert, 43, and Ramon, 35—the restaurant also maintains its own poultry and mini farm to ensure that only organic and natural ingredients are used in the dishes they serve.

From beverages to the main course, Herb Republic offers nothing but all-organic ingredients.

No alcohol

Alcoholic beverages are not offered in the restaurant since the owners believe that there are healthier options available.

"In teaming up with this business, we primarily considered the wellness of the customers since both of us (brothers) are interested in eating 'green' food items," Herbert says.

The idea of putting up a restaurant with a twist started in the latter part of 2008. The planning phase continues to this day even after the restaurant has already opened to the public.

"Planning is still ongoing since we are not yet done in developing the restaurant area, as well as the things that we can offer to potential customers," Herbert explains. "We also need people to realize that healthy eating does not always have to be expensive."

He also wants to shatter the notion that "green" food items are only for the well-off since restaurants offering such dishes serve them at high prices.

"In Herb Republic, dine organic notion is debunked," Herbert says.

HERB Republic aims to attract not just the health buffs.

ARTS & LIBRARY guests find Herb Republic unique.

For only P30 to P200, to adult, one can have a healthy meal.

The Parras brothers refuse to disclose the amount of capital they have raised to start the business, claiming that there are more important things than the money they have spent in putting up the restaurant.

"The time and effort we have been devoting to this business are priceless," Ramon tells the business.

According to Herbert, the business is "actually a collective effort."

"Other members of the family are contributing their time and ideas [to help the business grow]," Herbert says. "We want to encourage our customers to do the same."

Green chicken

The Herb Republic owners are still developing the one-hectare property where the restaurant is located.

A few metres from the restaurant, is the brothers' poultry facility where they tend to their "green chicken."

"When we serve here are purely organic chicken," says Herbert. "It means that each serving of chicken dish in our restaurant is guaranteed healthy since they are no artificial or antibiotic supplements given to the chicken."

Each chicken is also guaranteed fresh since what they serve are only slaughtered that same day.

The main challenge in putting up and maintaining this kind of business is how to introduce the idea of eating healthy to potential customers.

Health buffs are not only their main targets, according to the brothers.

"Everyone can try eating here as they can appreciate the importance of living a healthy lifestyle," says Herbert.

Apart from serving up healthy food, the owners of Herb Republic also plan to offer their customers modules and informal lectures on organic farming to raise their awareness.

We are aiming for sustainability here, says Ramon. "It would be interesting if the restaurant goes would learn how to do organic farming themselves."

Herb Republic is located in Barangay Maahas, Los Baños, Laguna, 62 kilometers south of Manila.

DAR to showcase farmer stories

FOR AS LONG AS HE CAN REmember, 68-year old Alfredo Maliston has been tilling the rice fields in the remote town of Sierra Republic in Palanan.

Having attended only a few years of primary education, he is among the hundreds of thousands of peasants uncertain of what farming has in store for the future of his family.

Today, he is one of the millions of beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) who have acquired new skills that can turn his profit.

He is now part of the Lalog Agri-based Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Palanan and recipient of a Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) training and livelihood development program.

The program dubbed the "Stakeholder Baseline Craft" was implemented in 2003 with the support of the Asian Development Bank to produce baseline information for tourists.

Made up of natural materials, attendants provide a relaxing sound of raindrops and have become an indigenous musical instrument sought after in seven countries.

"This venture provided additional monthly income to the cooperative members, enabling them to support their other livelihood activities.

Malinao is just one of the farmers who will take part in the 8th Agrarian Trade Fair to be held at the SM Megamall's Megatrade Hall on June 3 to 7, spearheaded by DAR's Bureau of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Development.

With the theme "Empowering Agrarian Reform Communities: Creating Jobs, Empowering Farmers and Ensuring Food Security," the event marks the culmination by Congress of the government's land reform program, which reached 10,000 this year in 2008.

Started in 1988 as the centerpiece program of the Aquino administration, CARP is a social justice program designed to ensure equal access to wealth and basic social services.

According to Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman, DAR has distributed 4 million hectares of farm lands to some 2.3 million farmers in more than two decades of implementation.

Agrarian Trade Fair is held in partnership with the ARB Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Development Program (AREDP), Philippine Fruit and Vegetables Industries, and supported by Sen. Miguel Zubiri, Department of Agriculture, Tourism and Trade, Land Bank of the Philippines and the National Historical Institute.

BINALOT

Creativity is key to success

JUMPSTARTING A BUSINESS AND THINKING INTO A THRIVING VENTURE IS NEVER EASY.

Any successful CEO will tell you the primary ingredients would include appropriate capital, a brilliant business concept and enough gumption to see it through.

There, though, are not enough.

Nets are easy start

Just ask Rommel Juan, owner of Binalot, one of the country's more original fast food chains and soon to a family of entrepreneurs.

"It wasn't easy at first," he discloses. "Aside from doing everything, we had to be doubly creative."

Rommel says that when Binalot was established in 1996, there was no physical setup. He and his brother Rudy used his pad as base of operations.

"You know how cavalier we. You can't have a bedroom to be a storeroom, so much less something that involved a lot of cooking," he says.

Rommel, who, along with his other siblings spent his childhood summers at his father's office where he learned the value of hard work, was taught early on the importance of paying attention to what customers say.

Thus, Binalot's earlier strategies involved delivering customers' orders with survey forms.

"During lunch, we'd deliver their food orders with the survey forms. Then in the afternoon, I'd come back to collect the forms. We learned a lot from those surveys. Some of our product offerings and even our pricing strategies were suggestions from those surveys," he says.

Taking it to the next level

Rommel reveals that though Binalot is quite established in the niche it has carved for itself, it sometimes is restless—not just in terms of its operations and marketing platforms, but also in its bank-end technology.

"SMEs face a lot of hurdles when they're just starting. And most of them financial," he says. "He take some very important things for granted. Like, proper documentation or inventory. Or just making sure that our customers can easily call us anytime, from anywhere."

Rommel, who recently had a PLDT SME Worker installed in his Greenhills branch, says that SMEs can benefit a great deal from investing in technology.

"I'm so excited with all the available technology. And to think that even the most basic setup, say a laptop, Internet connection a fax machine can spell a big difference for any business," he says.

BINALOT owner Rommel Juan

Advocating schemes for SMEs

As Rommel realized, a lot of other SMEs need to invest in technology.

"It's so competitive these days that if you're not properly equipped, competition can easily devour you," he explains.

He cites PLDT SME Network's various programs to assist them, for any SME. "What's good about it is you actually have a choice on which product bundle you would want, depending on what stage in your business you're in," he says.

What Rommel is referring to is PLDT SME Nation's Negosyo Boost program, which comes in three packages—Negosyo Launch, Negosyo Advance, and Negosyo On-The-Go. All three are available through an easy monthly payment scheme.

"SMEs are crucial in pushing our country forward and I truly believe that if we're to improve our business competence, then technology is the way to go. I'm happy that PLDT SME Nation has introduced these programs especially for SMEs like me. We cannot do everything by ourselves. It's about time somebody took care of our needs," he says.

One artist's labor bears fruit

From page B1

ranging a number of awards.

The products have also been featured in a number of publications in the United States, Japan, Korea and Europe.

But the international publicity that his business has generated made it prone to product imitation.

"Now, there are at least six companies trying to imitate our products, but I am confident they will never succeed," said Castañeda, adding that his products are all protected by patents.

Castañeda takes pride in using local mangoes in his wine, making Filipino products more popular in the global market.

"The mangoes that we have here remain the best among those I have tasted. And I am happy that I have this opportunity to let other people around the world have a taste of it."

The brand coffee wine, meanwhile, is expected to promote the coffee industry in Cavite.

'Pasalubong' center . . .

From page B1

The mural painting competition was sponsored by the Bicol party-list and the Dagupan Artists' Circle last month.

Morales said the center has the support of the provincial office of the Department of Trade and Industry which is promoting its "One Town, One Product" program.

Amiler Bonsol products, handicraft from Villasis and Binalonda are also sold. Antique furniture and decorative wood carvings from Mangaldan, while bags and hats made of corn husks and buri (palm) leaves come from Bautista and Agno towns.

"I hope to display and sell products from all Dagupenian towns in the future," Morales said. She said this eventually, would be another outlet for products from municipalities of Pangasinan, such as Binmaley, Sison, San Fabian and Infanta.

From class dunce to world-class neurosurgeon: A story of empowerment

BEN CARSON VIVIDLY REmembers a playground conversation during which his fifth grade schoolmates referred him as the dumbest kid in their grade. That's after some classmates decided he was probably the dumbest kid in the world.

Looking back from his vantage point as a world-renowned neurosurgeon, Dr. Carson can laugh at the memory. However, he had not been empowered as a young student. Ben Carson may never have doubted the belief that he was stupid.

Leaders empower others by believing in their potential.

Ben's mother, Sonya Copeland, chose to marry at the age of 13 to escape an unstable family situation. The marriage eventually unravelled, leaving Sonya alone in raising her two sons: Ben and Curtis. Sonya worked her boys' asses hard to make sure they were not left behind academically, but she was convinced they had the potential to excel in school.

Leaders empower others by teaching them the skills needed to succeed.

In an effort to focus her sons on their studies, Sonya curtailed their television time, recruited their teachers to send progress reports and made them submit book reports to her.

After receiving the reports, she would mark them with red ink and circulate the reports with the boys. Ben had no idea that his mother was illiterate and that she only marked up the papers to give the appearance of having read them.

Through time, Ben's mom's dirty little secret got out.

Thanks to his newfound study skills and increased reading comprehension, Ben's grades improved, and perhaps more importantly his self-esteem was repaired.

By the time he graduated, Ben had reached the top of his class, had received a full scholarship to Yale and had been voted "Most Likely to Succeed" by his classmates.

Leaders empower others by modeling them the skills needed to succeed.

After graduating from Yale University and receiving his graduate degree at the University of Michigan, Dr. Ben Carson quickly rose to fame for his skill as a surgeon. By age 33, he became the youngest ever director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

In subsequent years, Dr. Carson empowered fellow surgeons to take risks by accepting seemingly hopeless cases. Most famously, he successfully separated conjoined twins in 1987. All in all, his courage led to empowering advancements throughout the field of neurosurgery.

Leaders empower others by recognizing their successes.

As a parent, Dr. Carson was troubled by the disparity he witnessed between the perform schedules given to sports stars, and the near-neglect of top academic performers.

In an effort to celebrate the achievements of scholars, Dr. Carson launched a nonprofit organization—the Carson Scholars Fund.

Each year, the fund awards nearly 600 scholarships to high school students who have excelled in the classroom and community.

By honoring the dedication of students, the Carson Scholars Fund empowers kids to work hard as fixed on their studies as they do on their sports.

Had Sonya Copeland not taken the initiative to empower her son in his studies, who knows what Ben Carson's life might have looked like? Thanks to her empowerment, Ben developed into one of the world's foremost surgeons, and his life has added tremendous value to the world of humanity.

As a leader, your decisions to empower, or not to empower, your people have a direct impact on the future trajectory of their lives. Don't be stingy with your investment in your team. By affirming their potential, broadening their skills, pushing them to accept risk and celebrating their successes, you'll propel them into reaching exceptional heights.

John Maxwell's coming back to Manila! Attend The 360 John Maxwell Leadership Summit. Leading In Challenging Times at the Elisa Manglona Hotel on June 25, 2009. Call 4673614/4933982/4933892 or 8132372 to book your seats.)

VALERIE JILL S. REYES, a certified public accountant and a graduate of San Sebastian College-Recoletos, College of Law, Manila, currently passed the 2008 Bar Examinations. Valerie is the eldest daughter of Atty. Victor C. Reyes & Engr. Janette S. Reyes of Naga City. She is presently connected with Luyaws & Associates.

PVB declares cash & stock dividends, elects Directors

Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB) announced it has declared cash dividends of eight percent (8%) for preferred and two percent (2%) for common shareholders, and stock dividends of 31.25% for common shareholders in the Bank's recent annual stockholders' meeting. Col. Emmanuel V. De Dios (ret), PVB chairman, said the cash and stock dividends were approved in the said gathering held at the Veterans Federation of the Philippines compound on Reposo St., Manila where over 1,000 World War II veterans and their widows & heirs attended.

The stockholders' meeting was also highlighted by the election of the bank's Board of Directors. Elected for a one-year term to the 11-member PVB Board were Col. Emmanuel V. de Dios(ret), Ricardo A. Bautista, Jr., Engr. Antonio A. Ranjo, Cyrano Vicente R. Buenaventura, Atty. Demosthenes T. Mendoza, Atty. Eduardo P. Pinpin, Gen. Urbano A. Rodriguez, Atty. Romeo G. Roxas, Atty. Ramon P. Miranda, Juan A. Nuñez, Jr. and Col. Francisco T. Sarmiento.

Ricardo A. Bautista, Jr., PVB president, also reported that PVB had an audited net income of P468 million in 2008, a 28% decrease from the 2007 figure of P328.8 million, following the industry-wide trend of declining incomes in the past year. The private bank's total assets however jumped by 30% to P43.54 billion from 2007's P36.6 billion. Majority of the growth resulted from total deposits which grew by 25.3% to P37.1 billion from P29.6 billion year-on-year. The Bank's total loan receivables bolstered by 36.8% to P16.1 billion as of December 31, 2008 from the P13.8 billion of the same period of the previous year. The bank's capital base likewise grew to 4.1% to P4.67 billion from P4.49 billion in 2007.

The Bank's capital adequacy ratio stood at 21.46% using Basel II as of 2008 year-end, way above the Bangko Sentral's minimum requirement of 10% and the banking industry average of 18%. Capital adequacy is used to measure the capacity of banks to shoulder risks.

PVB also announced recently that it was expanding its branch network this year following the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) for seven (7) new branch licenses. Presently, PVB has 46 branches nationwide. The Bank is already eyeing five new branch sites in key cities in Luzon for this year. Other branch sites in the Visayas and Mindanao will soon follow.

The Bank's ATM card holder base also grew to 80,000 mainly due to payroll accounts with government units and agencies using its unique "5-in-1" card that functions as an ATM card, personnel or company ID, as the time-in/time-out card, a debit card and even a discount card in select establishments nationwide.

As of December 31, 2008, Veterans Bank has been noted as the 26th largest commercial bank in the country, marking its entry into the list of the Top 30 Commercial Banks in the Philippines. What makes this more significant is that last Dec. 31, 2000, PVB was ranked 51st out of the 60 commercial banks in the country in terms of total resources, placing it in the bottom 10 players operating in the industry.

Philippine Veterans Bank is exclusively owned by some 350,000 World War II veterans and their heirs all over the country. Chairman Col. Emmanuel De Dios(ret), the bank provides 20% of its net profits annually for programs that benefit the WWII veterans, their widows and families through the Board of Trustees for the Veterans of World War II (BTVWWII).

Among those are the Veterans Federation of the Philippines (VFP) Old Pavilion Center and VFP Wax Museum, Library and Archives, a repository of war memorabilia, and a state-of-the-art dioramas of the veterans' heroism for today's generation's. The Old Polwell Center, on the other hand, is a modern medical facility that provides free medicine, medical and dental care to aging veterans, conceived to decongest the government-run Veterans Memorial Medical Center or VMMC.

veteransbank

Banking services inspired by Heroes

The Philippine Veterans Bank is unique among private commercial banks because it owes its very existence to a special breed of men. We honor the Filipino war veterans. Theirs is the legacy that has shaped our core values as a corporation.

We give the best service that we can to our clients, inspired by those who have selflessly served their country.

Our drive towards greater profitability and growth is inspired by the thought of giving back to the veterans who have given so much to their countrymen.

There is limitless available of heroism inspires us to serve the hero in every Filipino today who works hard to give a better life to his family.

That is what defines us as a banking institution. Our striving to be a bigger, better and stronger institution is not just business, it's about pride, honor and duty. That's something we learned from our heroes.

Philippine Veterans Bank. Empowering today's Filipino heroes.

PERFECT EQUATION

Hyundai defines perfection of grace and power in Santa Fe

It pays to be edgy. When your passion drives you to a point where you believe that you can be the exception rather than the rule, you unleash yourself with new energy to face a stumbling block, and obliterate that with new groundbreaking ideas to come up more successful, virtually perfect than ever before.

Hyundai's journey to become the world's 5th largest automaker—a big leap from only 11th place and 6th place in 1999 and 2008, respectively—has not been without its share of challenges, disappointments, and near failures. But with each introduction, each automobile it implies, and each technology it discovers, Hyundai has become an unstoppable force to reckon with, earning the world's respect and admiration with its refined and confident image—a global brand mantra that continues to shape the automotive industry from Hyundai's cars that roam the roads, to the utmost in total customer satisfaction, upholding environment-friendly technology, and championing the safety and well-being of customers. As a result, Hyundai's winning strokes in the global auto industry has gone its leaps and bounds, making it one of the most highly acclaimed power brands. Hyundai's portfolio of accolades includes gaining 9 percent ranks equivalent to US$4 Billion in global brand value—an achievement that has catapulted Hyundai to rank 6 in the list of most valuable automotive brands, and distinguished Hyundai as the second fastest growing automotive brand in the world, according to the 2008 Top 100 Global Brands survey jointly conducted by Interbrand, a leading consultancy in branding, and BusinessWeek, the New York-based global business media organization. Another is the Genesis, Hyundai's premium entry in the luxury sports sedan segment, which was hailed North American Car of the Year for 2009, the 00 won Car of the Year Awards from Australia and Spain—both historic feats for the said countries as their most prestigious awarding ceremonies for the auto industry, and the list goes on. It is without a doubt that Hyundai's pursuit of perfection is translated to every product it creates and the service it gives to customers, earning for Hyundai the confidence of motorists and its meteoric rise in the global auto industry.

The SUV quite like no other

One SUV that stands out as a testament of Hyundai's enduring quest for perfection is Santa Fe. Never has Hyundai captured power so exquisitely and so intensely than in the Santa Fe. With its magnetic style equipped with its impressive ride, Santa Fe's beauty goes way beyond sheet metal deep, making it one of the finest and best ambassadors of the Hyundai brand.

Spearheading a new platform of elegance in the SUV category, the Santa Fe is visually compelling with its stately exterior styling emphasized by a big, commanding grille design, horizontal light clusters at the front and rear, clean, sleek character lines, graceful curves, body-colored bumpers, and twin exhaust pipes.

Luxury remains profoundly consistent inside its lavish seven-seat cabin with an array of features and conveniences that revel in utmost comfort and pampering. Further reassuring comfort and safety is an ergonomically crafted cockpit with a high seating position that provides an above-it-all visibility, fully adjustable steering wheel, and cool blue illuminated instrument panel. Delight in the Santa Fe's luxurious leather interior and multiple seating variations for maximum convenience. For additional cargo space, fold down the third row seats and have an enormous flat area with low loading sill ready to accommodate the occasional domestic load.

Compact powerplant, punchy performance

While its outside charm is undeniably intense, the Santa Fe's inner strength is just as fierce, unleashed by Hyundai's cutting edge powerplant: a 2.2-liter CRDi engine integrated with Variable Geometry Turbocharger. Affording you unbridled power at surprisingly frugal consumption, the CRDi VGT makes the Santa Fe one of the most fuel-efficient SUVs in its class.

Churning out an intense 220Nm (34.2 kg/m) of torque between 1,800 rpm and 2,000 rpm and maximum output of 150ps at 4000rpm, the Santa Fe, in 2WD and 4WD variants, delivers power that's comparably at par, or even higher than other SUVs in its class that have bigger engine displacement.

Further, the Santa Fe proves to be a practical and reliable choice. Mated to a 5-speed H-Matic Automatic Transmission, the Santa Fe's 2.2-liter diesel engine works efficiently to provide optimum power to match your journey. With more gears working to put the vehicle to a desired speed, there's less strain on the engine and less fuel is consumed, thus, helping prevent immediate wear and tear of the engine, and affording you more savings in the long run.

Getting comfy with the Santa Fe

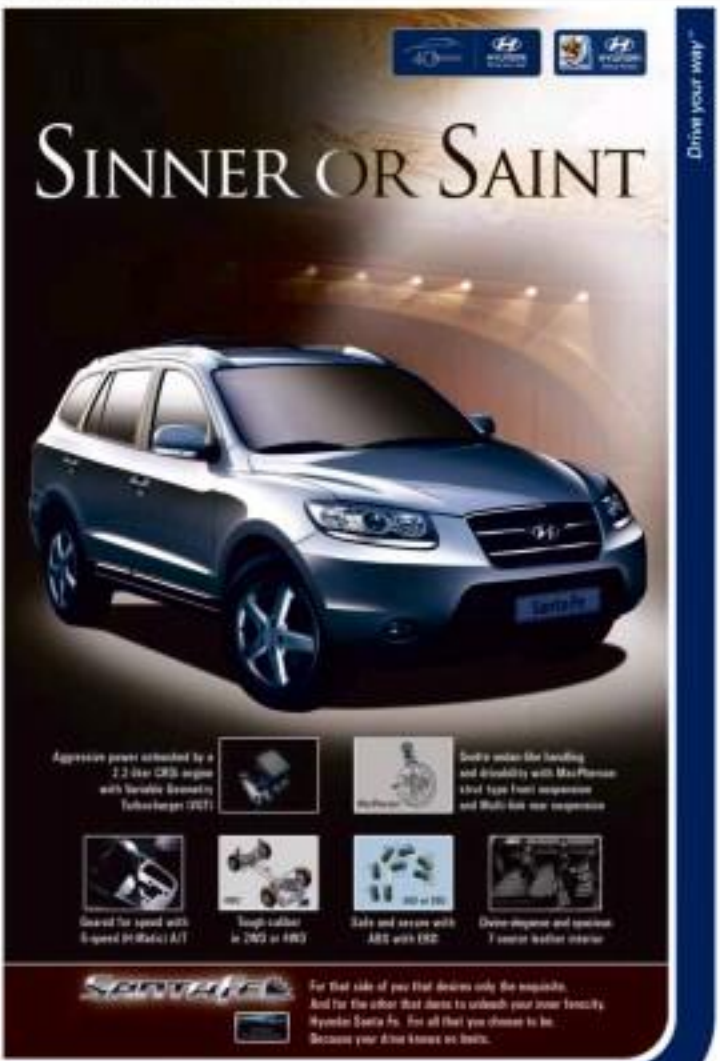
Pulling premium to its sedan-like handling and drivability is its re-engineered suspension that utilizes a reinforced MacPherson strut-type front suspension and a multi-link layout at the rear for more comfortable long drives and confident off-road capability.

As for safety, the Santa Fe is reassuringly at the forefront with Anti-lock Braking System with Electronic Brake Force Distribution (EBD) system, 15-inch disc brakes that provide ample stopping power, SRS airbags, and exceptional build quality underscored by rigid tests found in the strictest of Hyundai's engineering facilities.

The Santa Fe also thrives in a host of convenience features like a USB slot and Auxiliary input in the audio unit for your iPod or other portable MP3 players, 6 speakers for your listening pleasure, a cool box to store your refreshments in, a conversation mirror, and plenty of cubby holes and pockets for small items, adding up to its seemingly hass-free accommodation.

With the Santa Fe, Hyundai defines your expectations of a virtually peerless SUV in one class-leading package that brandishes both beauty and brawn. So go on ahead and be edgy or stylish as you please—with Santa Fe, the best of both worlds is at your command.

For more inquiries, or to schedule a test drive, visit your nearest authorized Hyundai dealer today.



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Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

YVES SAINT LAURENT, showroom in Paris home in Paisley Pair spread, preferred to travel in his imagination.

A vacation from one's self

Travel is to leave the everyday behind. Sometimes you leave your life behind so that you may appreciate it more

By Margie David Collins
Contributor

LONDON—WHAT IS IT ABOUT foreign vacations that they can leave you more wearied than if you had just stayed at home?

Imagine packing entire wardrobes and a medicine cabinet into a regulation-size luggage; canceling paper and milk deliveries; paying off household bills; notifying the postmaster and next-door neighbors; booking a housesitter and placing dog in kennels; navigating crowded airports, endless security checks; stashing lengthy duties; missing connecting flights; spending a ton of flying and mid-air boredom.

If vacations are to be successful—and memorable—they require organization and planning with military precision.

Scattered times

These days, tourist arrivals in favorite hotspots are severely down. Travel companies report a collapse in bookings and airlines are grounding their planes. Hotels are offering, at knockdown prices, all manner of extras: pillow menus, tour-guided walks, but private honeymoons—still empty rooms.

If you still have the resolve in these straitened times, there has never been a better time to see the world—the waterfalls of Iguazu Parana, palaces of Jaipur, the Eid mountains of Morocco, the olive groves of Tuscany, the magnificent ruins of ancient civilizations.

Act fast (and smart).

I don't, however, mean commuting eight European countries in five days, or taking to the skies from the back of a bus with exciting 48-hour stopovers and bewildered to tell where they are at any given time.

This isn't travel; this is conveyor-belt tourism that means you only bragging rights with ignorant people back home.

What does it mean—to travel? The philosopher Lao Tzu said a good traveler has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving. It is to leave the everyday behind, by leaving's sake, to become a curious and cheerful refugee from the weary sights, slights, hurts and disappointments of the modern world.

To look under an olive oval literary sun that would soften life's edges; to populate your links world with complete strangers who may become friends, as with whom to break bread.

A vacation from one's self, it is to engage with the now or the old to create fond memories—not with the Tramergo under-the-Sahara ships; the sights and smells of the Maghreb; the cuisine of France where everyone has an opinion on food; the romance of the Silk Road; the magic of Singapore; Bayreuth; the ubiquitous art of baby-eating and clam bakes in Cape Cod.

When everything you see, hear or feel is only for a time, it is apt to stop and think that you may happen time and look memories.

>VACATION C2

From page C1

A vacation from one's self

GRAND Canal in Venice

TREVI Fountain in Rome

In travel is to still your curiosity, feathered longings, in a boundless calmness fetch of instinctive wonder, wearing your capacity to be astonished.

Surprise, serendipity

We yearn to be amazed, we want to be enlisted. More days pedaling into each other, the hours opening up like a daisy in the heat of the Mediterranean sun. Deeper from a good long breath, losing oneself afternoons in slumber; the evenings a promise of moonlight scenes, the sonorous sound of night trains travelling past, the call to prayer by the muezzin from the minarets.

Sometimes we don't know what we're searching for until we find it. Travel is like that—looking upon something as an outsider, contemplating our condition from a great height or distance, calling roads less traveled.

In we escape, to dream and explore, so that we can discover more than what we see every day.

Before you go, study your destination well, but allow for serendipity and surprise. Savor down-forward experiences because the reality may well disappoint.

While they say a habit is fruitful souls, vacations aren't the cure to our problems. We can't pack several lifetimes into one vacation...as we go to one place at a time, slowly. While away the idle hours, not caring hither and thither, on unending outings of nights into a couple of hours.

Genuine sophisticates want less, not more; quality, not quantity.

Whether it's a voyage of discovery, romance or thrills, a shopping or cultural expedition, a gourmet or activity weekend, or a few days' sheer indulgence; whether alone or in company, on foot, by plane, car or train, remember that, as Alain de Botton said: "At the heart of travel is a perceptual shift; it doesn't depend on going to an exotic or faraway place; it goes to the heart of happiness, and the only way to be happy is to realize how much depends on how you look at things."

Anxieties

With all its existential anxieties, sometimes you have to leave your life behind, so that you may appreciate it more.

The chill of winter has given way to April showers, bringing an end to the sinuous choreography of summer holidays, which we dance to with glee and anticipation.

Maybe Cap Ferrat again this year? Bilbao in the Fiesta? A scenic train voyage to Jeruel? Zanzibar? Monaco? The mountains of the Bugsuk? My home and garden?

"Free yourself to travel in his imagination," said Saint Laurent's decorator Jacques Grange. "Real places disappointed him. Without leaving his apartment, he could voyage on the Blue Guinea-Shooter of Cocaine or the Spain of Goya."

Quite so. Travel, after all, is a state of mind; an inner experience that, if you let it, sends you away from here and now, washing away the stones and dust of everyday life.

Nostalgic ferry trip along the Pasig

Text and photos by John Ramirez
Contributor

QUESTION: WHAT DO MANILA and Paris have in common? Dual landmarks both designed by Monsieur Gustave Eiffel. The man behind Paris' landmark tower also designed two of Manila's well-known steel edifices: San Sebastian Cathedral and Quinta Bridge, the former being the only one of its kind in Asia.

Manila was known as the Paris of the East during the pre-war and the luxurious city planner was so enchanted by the city that he even planned grand plans for it, starting from the old Luneta all the way to Dewey Boulevard in Pasay.

However, Manila has deteriorated beyond recognition.

Pasig river, which snakes from the mouth of Manila Bay all the way through Laguna de Bay, has been dying for decades.

Various efforts have been executed to revive the river, including those by First Ladies Imelda Marcos and Amelita Ramos. Recently, ABS-CBN Foundation's Gina Lopez took the gargantuan task of reviving the dying river.

M/V PASIG Ferry I passing before the National Press Club

OLD Manila architecture is still grand

Urban legend

It is said that Imo. Marcos had been so impressed with Lee Kuan Yew's success with Singapore River's revival in 1977 that she wanted a boardwalk to cover the entire length of Pasig where people could rummage on weekends, and she tried replicating Boat and Clarke Quays. However, the Marcoses were overthrown in 1986 before she was able to implement it along Pasig.

Fast-forward to 2009. Pasig River is still gasping for breath, and people may have second thoughts about using the river as an alternative route to travel around the metro.

The Department of Transportation and Communication recently upgraded the Pasig River ferry, from local navigation boats; they have now acting a twin-hull air-conditioned catamarans that craft that slices through Pasig River's waters with grace and agility. In comparison with José Rizal's "El Filibusterismo" "Bapor Tabo," which noisily and slowly traversed the modern Pasig for hours in the 19th century. In its place is a modern form of transportation comparable to what modern Europe uses in its waterways. One can easily get on and off in well-designed stations that cover various outposts from Escolta all the way to Guadalupe, and planes are about to cover the entire stretch all the way to Binondoc, once the dredging of the heavily silted river has been completed.

One can relive the romance of Pasig River which is now just a distant past, especially when one passes in front of Malacañang Palace and the few patches of greenery left such as Arroceros Forest Park and Presidential Security Group grounds. The sturdy mansions that used to line the river to the Santa Ana District have long been demolished to give way to squatter colonies, with the exception of the Lichauco house and Father Hurley's church-beloved Xavier House, which have survived the ups and downs of the river, unlike the arcuate mansions.

Manila Boat Club

I can't help but feel sad for the Manila Boat Club, which has been denied permanently due to lack of membership before it could turn 100 years old. Riches status members have moved to bigger clubhouses or most of the original members have passed away and their kith-were no longer keen on playing squash or walking the river. I was lucky I was able to experience cruising in Manila Boat Club, and loved the train spirit we mustered getting the boats from the alleys at the boat club and putting it down by the river, wishing it after our lap all the way to Guadalupe. Makati's sky-line has changed so much, especially with the addition of new upscale residential buildings in Bodowell and Guadalupe. However, some things have remained all these years, big factories that still operate along the river that have contributed to the river's death together with the million homes that have treated Pasig as their own sewage.

One can so comfortably tackle the ferry or may opt to stay at the ship's bow to relax and feel the wind in one's face. This ferry is actually the fastest way to go to Divisoria from Makati. Just check the hourly departures either in Guadalupe, Hulo or Lambingan stations. One can get off at Escolta Station and walk toward Binondo or take a calesa or jeepney. From Escolta Station, one can see the grandeur of Old Manila, from the standpoint of Manila Post Office or the poetry of Gustave Eiffel's architecture, the Quinta Bridge. All this without flying all the way to France, and for a measly P45. Not a bad way to rediscover our historic past and glorious future, especially if Pasig River gets a second lease on life.

POCKET amusements park for San Pedro de Makati Resta

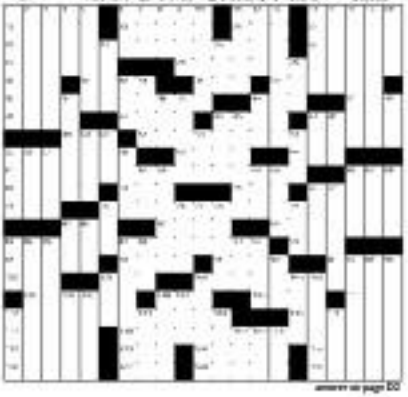
The ferry ride is not only an alternative transport mode; it's a trip through history

ELEVEN high-rises line the Pasig river

Sunday Crossword

PREMIER CROSSWORD! By Frank A. Longo

CALMING EFFECT



answers on page D2

MOX VJ Jovi Feliz, Samsung specialist Cora Domingo and hostess Rayne Cruz

SAMSUNG Abi Herrera Anne Lopez, Pat del Rio, Abbi Perez, Jeej Javier, Ace Cruz, Mabel Cruz

Star touch-screen phone

GLAITY Jaylene and Samsung head for mobile phones Fe Varilla

Hajji Salvador brings her powder puff Samsung Star

ASSHOTS Ivanna Lo, Ina Cabuco

SAMSUNG HEWLE RECENTLY unveiled the most affordable full-featured touch-screen phone in Asia, the Samsung H220, also known as Samsung Star.

It has the latest multimedia features in a slim and compact body that measures a mere 11.90mm.

Adopting a 3-inch TFT full-touch screen and Samsung's TouchWiz User Interface with Mobile Widgets, the phone requires its users to enjoy their movie easily and intuitively.

Other features include a 3.2 megapixel camera and video recording supporting QVGA at 15fps. The phone supports multi-format music files and plays them back via SRS's technology for an enhanced virtual 3D sound experience. It also features music recognition using Shazam's "Find Music" service.

To enjoy various multimedia content, Samsung Star supports an 8GB memory capacity with an external memory slot via micro SD. Users can enjoy full-featured browsing with an accelerometer sensor for convenience.

For convenience, the phone has a QWERTY soft keyboard and handwriting recognition. Through the Zenlock Lock feature, it will automatically unlock or go to various pre-assigned applications like media and messages.

Or, using "Photo Connect," users can call a contact by simply touching an uploaded image.

The launch was held at Samsung Style Concept store, and in Isetan, Rose of the area Eastwood Mall, with magician Ben Machate encountering the various exciting features of the Samsung line in his act.

Theatre actress Aga Calalang hosted the festivities, while new stars Mojo Salvador, Rayne Cruz, Mox VJ Jovi Feliz and fashion maverick Ivo Cabuco joined Samsung executives Fe Varilla, Coco Domingo, Marlene Gabriel, Bert Chua, Rainer Arevalo and Odette Rebello in unveiling the Samsung Star.

The Samsung Star retails at P10,490 and is available in all authorized Samsung Mobile dealers nationwide.

SAMSUNG executives Rene Jordera, Joel Cruz and Fe Varilla

Avida Towers
San Lorenzo

A growing market of young urbanites whose lives are dominated by successes at work and an active social life is driving demand for residential condominium projects in the heart of the Makati business district, according to officers of Avida, the affordable housing arm of property giant Ayala Land, Inc.

Mostly in their 20's and 30's, they are collectively known as Gen Y, Echo-Boomers, Millennials, and Net Gen. Today they are the fastest growing segment in the work force. They are tech-savvy, confident and know what they want. Mostly junior executives, rising professionals and aspirationals, Gen Y-ers work an average of 12 hours a day.

THE GEN-Y LIFESTYLE Although they spend long hours in the office, work isn't their life. They feel a need to "de-stress" and be part of an active community like groups organized around sports. They are also known to be environmentally conscious. They dislike long commutes and want to live close to their friends, place of work, and offices of local services.

The location of Avida Towers San Lorenzo is a short stroll away from the offices of Legaspi and Salcedo Villages. The variety of Makati's dining and entertainment options serves as the chief attraction of the development. Another is its location, which is adjacent to Rattanmart, a convenient hub for basic food and grocery necessities. Greenbelt and Glorietta malls are also a few minutes away.

OWNING A CONDO First-time home buyers are between their late 20's to mid 30's. They aspire to have their own space and know that owning a property is good investment. Young Filipino expats purchase residential units too, so they have their own place to come home to.

According to Leo Montenegro, Avida President, a good number of the 1,152 units to be distributed between two towers in Avida Towers San Lorenzo have been taken up by young professionals. He notes that Gen Y women in particular, have become a very important Avida market segment. Unlike female Baby Boomers, these women plan their lives according to their own time. With or without plans of marriage, they are buying homes, driven by the high possibility of property values appreciating over time. Montenegro adds that Gen Y-ers are also fitness-conscious and will appreciate the outdoor gym, swimming pool, jogging path and other sport facilities of Avida Towers San Lorenzo.

LOCK-AND-GO UNITS Gen-Y-ers' active lifestyle makes them prefer simple, low-maintenance spaces. "They want to be able to lock up and go and feel assured of the security of their home," says Montenegro. To address these concerns, Avida has tapped Ayala Properties Management Corporation (APMC) to set up and run the maintenance, administrative and security systems. With over four decades of property management experience, APMC manages most of the buildings and other properties of Ayala Land in Makati and has been largely responsible for their sustained values.

Avida Towers San Lorenzo is a joint venture with Makati Greenbelt Palms Land, Inc. Its two towers of 26 and 30 stories will be connected by a podium which will have sports and gym equipment and a swimming pool. Tower 1 will be completed in 2013.

Avida Towers San Lorenzo has been designed specifically for young urbanites who value career achievements, an active social life and being in the middle of everything. And with Ayala Land backing Avida, they know that their home will see them through as they write the next chapter of their lives.

Designed for the Gen-Y lifestyle

YOU CAN START OWNING A UNIT NOW! CALL 848-5200

Sunday LIFESTYLE Relationships

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Nostalgic ferry trip along the Pasig /C2

Kenny's 12 Fresh Sandwiches
Have something good this snack time.
Kenny's 1/3 lb. Cheese Burger is a mouth-watering sandwich made with a perfectly-grilled beef patty on crisp lettuce and slices of tomato and cucumber on Kenny's own whole wheat bun.
Call 533-8888 www.kennys.com.ph

Waiting for Cocoa

By Katrina Pup-Santos
Cocoa Diaries

THE LAST TIME I SAW OUR six-year-old dog Cocoa was on March 7.

My husband and I had brought our three [illegible]-month-old son to my parents' house in Pandacan for a visit. We were about to board the car when Cocoa licked my baby's toes and attempted to jump inside. Cocoa enjoyed riding vehicles. But since we were running late for our next appointment, I, annoyed at his efforts, parried Cocoa's little head and told him, "Bone! Bone."

Now how I wish we took him home with us instead. How was I to know there would be no next time?

Two days later, Cocoa went missing. It was a Monday. I got a frantic text message from my sister early morning. She learned from our brothers that Cocoa appeared to have "escaped" from our house. Assuming Cocoa was still asleep when she left for school, she did not make much of Cocoa not waiting for her off.

I phoned our household help and asked that they alert the neighbors. It wasn't the first time Cocoa had wandered off. He had roamed down our street to play with his crush, a dachshund.

I was alarmed yet confident Cocoa would be returning shortly. After all, he knew his way home; was known to everyone on our street, and was wearing a dog tag bearing his name, our address and phone number. We proclaimed "missing dog" posters offering a reward nonetheless.

No word

Two days after his disappearance and still no word, my sister reported the incident to our barangay. On her way home, neighbors reported having seen Cocoa, who they thought was taking his usual stroll. We received the same [illegible]...an hour he was still alive; the possibility of Cocoa coming home was still there.

A week later, we got a lead from a neighbor who claimed to have seen Cocoa in a [illegible] pet shop in Sucat. A friend rushed there to check. Sadly, the info must have come too late—the dog had already been sold two days ago for P12,000.

My heart sank. The pet shop had no doc-

WAITING D2

How can we give up on him? He's family

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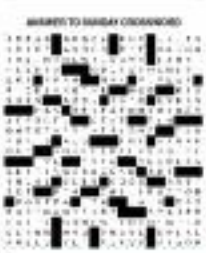
Waiting for Cocoa



annotation of the transaction—an envelope or paper, work, nothing. When asked who sold them the dog, all they said was an old lady they did not know. There was no way for us to confirm if it was indeed Cocoa.

But our neighbor was convinced. It seemed an unlikely for this store to have a black Pomeranian for sale, where the establishment isn't a pet shop to begin with. The location is definitely not ours. We live in a neighboring village, just a tricycle or jeep ride away.

Online mission

At weeks rolled by, the protect we had put up began to disappear. Some were removed as part of our village's efforts to keep the surroundings clean. Still, my husband and I would replace posters last week after week.

We also distributed posters in veterinary clinics. We took our mission online too, writing blogs, e-mailing animal rights groups, friends and strangers. The online community has been very supportive, with people promising to keep an eye out for Cocoa.

It was also on the web that we got information that Cocoa was indeed eaten by an old woman as such a treat. This was before the supposed sale in favor. If Cocoa had been sold, sadly, our search brings us to what seems a dead end. He no longer have leads.

People ask me if I've given up on my search. How can I give up? Cocoa was more than a pet to us. He is family. Would you lose hope if it were your sibling that were missing?

I read the poem "Rainbow Bridge" hoping to find consolation. But there is none. "Rainbow Bridge" is apt for those who have lost pets through death. The pain of losing Cocoa is much worse than losing a pet die.

We've lost dogs to illnesses and while painful, we were able to move on. Cocoa's case is different because I know he's alive. He's somewhere out there and I cannot be with him.

Heart condition

Day and night, I wonder—has his new family discovered his heart condition? Does he has to be fed little by little, otherwise he'll choke? Does he enjoys being held like a baby? Has he finds enjoyment in playing hide-and-seek?

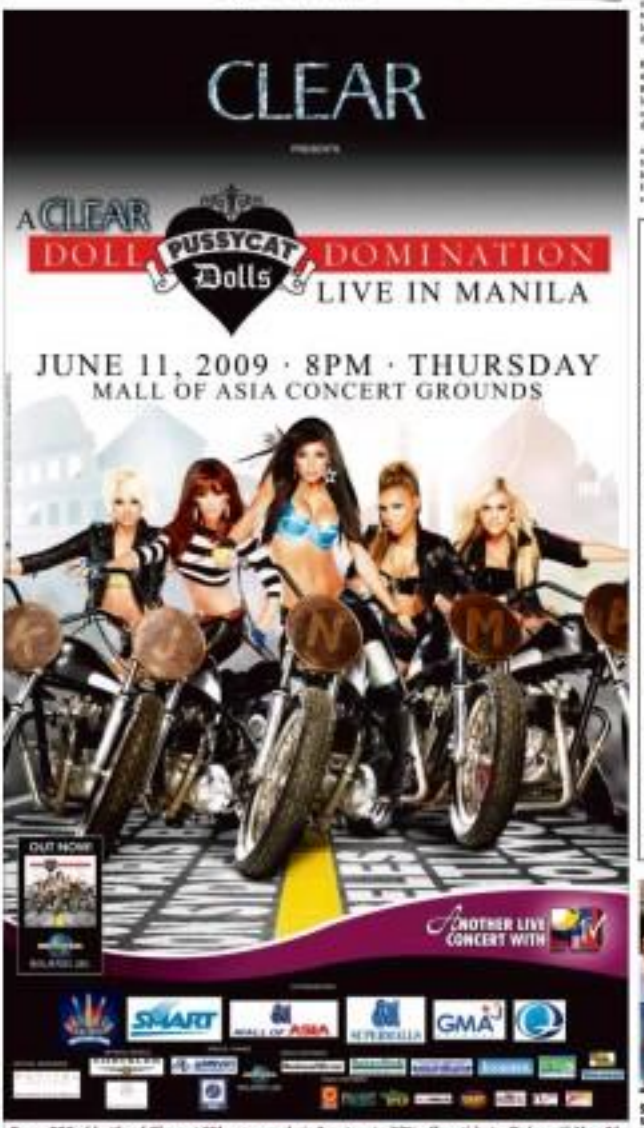
The pain of not knowing whether he is cared for or not is just excruciating.

I appeal to readers—if you think you may have seen Cocoa, please contact me. If you notice your neighbor with a relatively new dog resembling Cocoa, please get in touch. We're willing to take him regardless of what condition he's in, and we would buy him back in a heartbeat.

Whatever he is, we know well enough that Cocoa can manage to be happy. He's a happy dog. But I will say that no family can possibly love Cocoa as much as we do.

To my dear Cocoa, if only you can read, I love you. I will never give up on you. And I will continue to wait for you. I hope to see you again, in this lifetime or the next.

The author would like to thank the countless individuals who have dedicated their time and effort in helping search for Cocoa. You may reach her at ani.ruiz2208@yahoo.com.



Is it possible to excel in work and studies at the same time?

Dear Emily,

I am 27, single and employed in the retail industry as a warehouse assistant. My dilemma started early this year. I took the entrance exams for law as a scholarship in our province. There, I was offered a promotion that will relocate me—which I accepted. Now, the College of Law informed me that I have passed the exams.

To be a lawyer is how I always have been my childhood dream. I am nearing up for the new job but I don't want to disappoint my superiors. And I am also thinking of my future. Retail jobs will not be forever and I don't want to wake up one day thinking over the lost opportunity. Frankly now, I will already be 31 by the time I finish. Should it still be possible to work and study at the same time?

PIX

Everything is possible, as they say if there's a will, there's a way.

Wonders you rather pursue your wish for while you're still young, rather than look back on your life with regret? There's nothing to beat watching that morning the chance you let slip by—the "could haves" and "should haves."

Thirty-one is not shortage to start over. Haven't you heard of this 40-year-old great-grandmother who went back in high school and got her diploma? Or that 30-year-old mother who went back to college to be a doctor?

A job will always be waiting for you, if you deserve it. Haven't you proven your ability with your recent promotion?

Going through life is like getting to work. You have to be well motivated and ready to fight every battle. If you go to law school, you will bring a vast reservoir of knowledge to tackle problems big and small. There will be naysayers who will try to distract you from your goal, or even to belittle you. Don't make your spirit sour. Weigh both options and in the end, follow your heart. What will truly make you a complete person? Look beyond tomorrow or next year. What do you really want to be in the lifetime?

E-mail emilyspost@inquirer.com.ph, subject: Lifestyle

SEAL INTERNATIONAL MANILA VISITS BASCO

Southeast Asian Airlines (SEAIR), the only subsidiated airline operating in Basco, Batanes, has introduced several tour packages to this one-of-a-kind Philippine destination. It brought members of SEAL International Manila, the oldest travel club in the Philippines and in the world, to Basco, joining the tour are Jose Lugay, Ernest Ferrer Yusi & Tours; Patty Cheang, Air Philippines; Conrado Catalang, Baybay Tours; Mike Esperas, Pilot in Command; Lito Esperas, SEAIR president; Patty King, SEAL International Manila secretary; Tony Gonzalez, Tourist Information Bureau; Charmaine Dee and Marilyn Dee, Par Pacific Travel; George Jaico, SEAL International Manila president and Dr. Cynthia Cayco-Jaico. In the background is the Basco Airport Passenger Terminal where Batanes tourism begins with the pictorial display of enticing Batanes destinations.

The cucumber slice set with a bourbon, salty, gastronated rim dip treat feel in a base lime with floating lemon and grapefruit slices.

Guests were able to experience the refreshing benefits of both variants, Fresh Moisture and Energizing.

GLAMMED UP in every sense the soothing sensory afternoon

(L-R): Spabella's proprietress Emmarose Policarpio and Career Magazine editor Liz Bernardo

VIBRANT touches of Go Fresh! were added on the tearoom's Spa Grapefruit and cucumber centerpiece gave a fresh and fruity feel.

Stylebible's Isha Bellaya

Preview's beauty editor Agnes Bengzon shows the new Dove Go Fresh! range is something to smile about.

A skin-sational treat with Dove Go Fresh!

It was a feast for the senses as Dove launched the latest addition to its line of skincare, the Go Fresh! collection of beauty bars, body wash, cooling lotions, and anti-perspirant deodorants, at the luxurious La Spa of Sofitel Philippine Plaza.

The two variants of the refreshing line are Fresh Moisture, which channels the soothing sensations of cucumber and green tea; and Energizing, which has the stimulating scents of grapefruit and lemongrass.

MODEL and host Teresa Herrera

Actor model and devoted yogini Teresa Herrera at the helm of activities, the afternoon affair started with a short presentation by Dove brand manager Dennis Perez on the refreshing benefits of the new range.

"Dove's Go Fresh line leaves your skin moisturized, soft to the touch, makes you look and feel younger, and gives you that happy, confident air," says Perez. "Soft skin keeps you invigorated, refreshed, and glowing from head to toe. That youthful 'bounce' to the skin can be achieved by a great hydrating and revitalizing skin regimen."

Guests were treated to an exquisite sprout of nibblers inspired by the Go Fresh! line and exclusively created by Sofitel's executive Chef Pipo Alumia.

Then it was pampering all the way as guests were given a chance to personally experience the products through a series of customized massage treatments designed by the La Spa team of therapists, especially for the event.

After savoring their own pair of Summa Sip-thips, the sensory adventure began with an invigorating footbath to help relieve tired feet, courtesy of the Fresh Moisture or Energize Beauty Bar, which contains light moisture lotion and has invigorating beads that act as little wake-up calls for skin.

Next came an exhilarating body scrub to exfoliate the skin and make it feel soft and supple, followed by a quick shower. Both regimens incorporated the Fresh Moisture and Energize Body Wash.

The experience was capped by an uplifting body massage using the fresh Moisture Cooling Lotion. The crisp scent of cucumber and soothing green tea, together with 24-hour nourishing moisture, keeps skin feeling soft and smooth and boosts energy.

To seal the blissful deal, a post-pampering dinner awaited guests at the Spinal Deck. True to the spirit of more energy and freshness, the entire customized meal featured scrumptious bites bursting with fresh and tasty flavors.

The new Dove Go Fresh! range carries the two exciting variants of Fresh Moisture and Energizing.

Spa princess Rose Prince-Valdes and ladies Rally Miss in their generous lip-dips

Dove brand manager Dennis Perez

MISIA'S beauties April Dorian and Carla Sibut

THE MASSAGE protocol designed by the La Spa therapists incorporated the Dove Go Fresh! products.

CHALK magazine's EIC Mara Cayaga

ENJOYING customized foot scrubs designed to wake up skin

Sassa Jimenez designs for multifaceted women

A YOUNG, TALENTED DESIGNER unveils her newest collection—one that strips off all frills and trimmings.

Sassa Jimenez presents "Revelation" in this year's Philippine Fashion Week. The collection showcases pieces that highlight the body's curvaceous, through fabric and construction.

The words "polished" and "sleek" perfectly describe this collection. Inspired by style icon Dita Von Teese and the women of the '40s, Jimenez has effortlessly created the classic with a retro look with her current pieces. Each dress is a perfectly crafted creation of lovely, feminine simplicity, punctuated with hints of edgy sophistication that projects a look of total elegance and refinement.

"It's all about looking put together for any occasion. I wanted to create something that was fresh and unique, yet classic. I wanted something that would fit well and look good from every angle. Whether it's for a girls' night out or a formal occasion, clients will be able to wear these dresses and look up-to-date, and will be able to wear the same thing in the future without looking out of place," Jimenez says.

Silver does projecting a certain look, however, "Revelation" is essentially a journey of self-discovery. "Women have an image of themselves, and they like to stay within the confines of this picture. They get stuck in their comfort zone," Jimenez says. "But 'Revelation' is all about fearlessness. It's about stepping into a dress you wouldn't normally wear, and looking so powerful in the mirror and saying, 'Wow! I didn't know I could look good in something like this!'"

She sums it up in a powerful statement. "Fashion isn't about eating clothes to cover up who you really are. It's about wearing something that brings out your many dimensions, and being aware in all these aspects of yourself. I hope that 'Revelation' will encourage women to make that switch in mentality."

Catch Sassa Jimenez's show during Philippine Fashion Week today, 6 p.m., at SMX Convention Center Premiere Rooms 2 & 3.

"IT'S ALL about looking put together for any occasion."

"POLISHED" and "sleek" perfectly describes her collection.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

IN THIS ISSUE

A vacation from one's self /C1

Think before you click on the Hayden Kho quiz

Sex, lies, videotape and Facebook

By Bianca Caronan
Contributor

Inspiration • Progress • Innovation

Who would've thought that a multinational pharmaceutical manufacturing giant virtually started out as a small pharmacy in downtown Cebu?

For the Wong-Cuenco brothers, achieving the current stature of International Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (IPI) took a lot of hard work, perseverance, and an unlimited amount of faith in themselves.

From the mere Globus Asap line they have started using Sibuguinara Timor nearly years back, the brothers were able to take their business into a level they never imagined - a top export-import health-care products manufacturer.

With very little to start with, they ventured to become selling herbal medicines and started making their own brand of toiletries. From humble beginnings, to survive, the brothers took on all roles necessary to bring their products outside the walls of their small town in Estancia Street. Not long after, their trademark Effexacort CE, started a good following.

The years after that brought more challenges to IPI. Natural disasters, political difficulties, IPI has its share of severe positive achievements as well.

From a mid-sized company in Estancia with only 8 employees, it rose to become an enterprise of more than 1,000 employees, with 4 manufacturing plants in the Philippines, and a regional office in Singapore. It has its huge plants in Makati and in Mandaue, and a sugarcane plantation in Negros Occidental.

The growth didn't stop there. IPI ventured into other businesses which include IPI Realty & Development, Sun Pride Foods, Inc., Makuon Mini Packing Corporation, and International Winery.

It has reaped numerous awards – a proof that IPI products have been recognized and by its market.

Now celebrating 50 years of success, IPI continues to produce affordable products, not only to the local market, but to the people outside the Philippines as well.

Truly, IPI's golden anniversary makes them a symbol of inspiration, progress and innovation.

IPI's Golden Year

Today, IPI continues to enjoy a reputation of producing quality products that have passed international quality standards and has maintained a high level of production reliability and extensive distribution network for all its products.

Milestones

IPI's pursuit of excellence has earned for IPI countless awards over the years. Among the notable recognitions bestowed on the company are Gold Awards from associations in Australia and the US. Locally, it has been presented with Presidential Awards by the Office of the Muslim Affairs, the Philippine League of Government Workers, Inc., Philippine Dental Association, and National Education and Santa Development Authority, among others.

1957 - 1959

1960

1960's

1970's

1980's

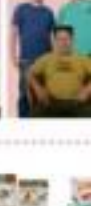
2000-2004

2005

2006

2007

2008



IPI's PRIDE!

People & its Products

Casmo Ethyl Alcohol

Clinically-tested Casmo Alcohol makes disinfecting more fun. The pioneer in flip-top cover, Casmo Alcohol comes with a pleasant fragrance that guarantees a "tanggang ganoon-lang" experience.

With no hardly 80 % traffic, Casmo Alcohol is likewise perfect for those on the go.

Omega Pain Killer

The need for fast relief from muscle pains prompted the rise of another great product--Omega Pain Killer was formulated as an answer to dealing with aching muscles without having to deal with side effects.

An alternative to Efficascent Oil, Omega Pain Killer is also a safer option than pills and gives instant relief upon application.

Efficascent Oil

As the flagship product, Efficascent Oil has become a household name for years. Recognized as an effective remedy for body pains since it was introduced in 1959, Efficascent Oil continues to be the undisputed leader in liniment brand in the market today.

Modern Germicidal Soap

Ordinary soaps do not work best against germs that cause infection and body odor. Modern Germicidal Soap acts as shield to keep the whole family away from germs.

Now, with its new look, it's more! Fragrance and price tried more affordable than other brands. Modern Germicidal Soap is definitely the family's ultimate ally.

Gastripac

A supplement that helps control acid production in the stomach, Gastripac offers relief from stomach discomfort caused by factors like stress, smoking, drinking or eating too much.

And because it is a herbal product, it's aluminum free -- making it a better choice over antacids.

Lacti-E

Capsule

An active source of Vitamin E and Lecithin ideal for maintaining an active lifestyle. Lacti-E works to improve blood circulation, stimulates the brain for better memory, and strengthen the body's immune system.

Further, its concentrated Vitamin E holds the secret to one's fountain of youth, creating a visibly younger looking you!

Dr. Wong's Medicinal Sulfur Soap

Dubbed as Nature's Healing Power Oil, Dr. Wong's Sulfur Soap is an effective formulation against skin problems such as pimples, acne, excessive oil, allergic dermatitis and psoriasis.

A germicide, fungicide and parasiticide, it helps stop body odor, thanks specific oil and aids in the healing of cuts and sores.

Mama's Love Baby & Personal Care Products

Nothing can be greater than a mother's love for her baby. IPI knows this and has come up with baby care products to convey that message. Mama's Love Baby and Personal Care Products are made from the natural and most natural ingredients so your child's well-being is never compromised.

Vaporin Air Sanitizer

Proven effective in controlling the growth and spread of airborne microbes, Vaporin Air Sanitizer cleans the air from germs responsible for most of the diseases that are commonly here, hence providing protection to family members.

Its vapor, when inhaled, relieves respiratory passages particularly those of the nose and throat. It also helps open the lungs and reduces inflammation of the mucous membranes, thereby giving relief and making breathing easier.

Herbycin Syrup

A most effective remedy against cough as its name. Herbycin is made from fresh leaves of Oregano. It works to relieve chest congestion and ease breathing problems. Proven to be clinically safe and effective, Herbycin was among the products in the World Exhibition of Inventions and Innovations.

Zip Insect Repellent

Proven effective in repelling mosquitoes away, Zip's active formula and ingredients last up to 4 hours for adults and 2 hours for kids. Unlike other repellents, Zip has a pleasant scent that is gentle on the nose. It can also be used as a repellent against mothballs, fleas and other common insects. With a more affordable price than other repellent brands, you are assured of your family's protection from the threat of dengue with Zip Insect Repellent Lotion.

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Think before you click on the Hayden Kho quiz

From page E1

The list of questions continued: links on the different videos (example: "What is your name?" Answer: "Dance with Abi's balls"). Published results revealed that the people who took it on my friend list like the Hunter Boyet video. The test proclaimed, "You're into a mutually beneficial relationship [sic]. You love to give as well as receive [sic]. You keep your wild side hidden from your adoring public. The whole world thinks you're sweet. Hayden would forgive [sic]."

Flippant reactions

The Hayden Kho-quiz, like all other quizzes on Facebook, was obviously created to make light of the situation many had been blasting as ridiculous proportions by the likes of Boog Aviello (who, in a rare moment of hypocrisy, gave a privilege speech entitled "A Doctor's Personality" before the Senate). It was just a silly quiz, but to people it reflected the sentiments of a largely flippant public.

A friend asked her friends on Facebook and Twitter, "Reply if you haven't seen any Hayden Kho video until now. And if you don't want to watch any video at all. In honest." She later modified the question to, "Reply if you have seen any Hayden Kho video, and your first thought while watching it. God"

Someone replied, "forgot about Katrina Halili. Bilanan's on girl! She isn't moaning. She isn't screaming. She's growling, grrr! SHOWLIKO For... Hahahaha!"

People resized megaphotos with memes who appeared on the cyclists, to distract sex videos, but it didn't stop them from forwarding joke about these memes, or making (and making) Facebook quizzes.

Violated women

Entertainment magazine editor Jojo Magbanua spoke out against the videos in the Philippine Entertainment Portal website—"If we respect women[, we wouldn't be standing around car decks and calling everyone to come and watch, like it was just another television show. Like it was entertainment, like no real lives were involved. We wouldn't be moving friends to provide the links to these sites. And we wouldn't be snickering and giggling, while clobbering all over the place with lewd jokes."

Magbanua said, "Each time my second Sharo videos are viewed, a feminist being is violated, and that, with each violation, the entire human race is diminished just that little bit more."

It's easy to rage against Kho for making the videos and to blame his former friends for leaking the sex tapes. But everything done afterward, such as passing on links, buying DVDs or spreading opinions, is routinely due to irresponsibility of the persons who helped victimize the women more by taking advantage of the situation. Per usual? To alleviate their boredom.

Not to make a mountain of a molehill, but taking the "Hayden K Scandal Video" quiz on Facebook is tantamount to allowing our lust WARL but all the women involved—yes, the making light of the horrible situations, and rare, by giving them names they do not deserve (like each other).

While social networking and its ills are mostly fun, think before you click on the Hayden Kho quiz: a few laughs just aren't worth the price of someone else's dignity.

E-mail the author at bmoncayo@yahoo.com

LANCE Y. Gokongwei, president and COO of JG Summit Holdings, and Johnson Robert Ong Jr., Saizen general manager

MEGAN Young, Jeepney TV personality and Tommy Lee O, vice president for Property Development of Robinsons Malls

HIROTAKE Yura, Daiso Sangyo Japan Inc. president, and James Go, chair and CEO of JG Summit Holdings

Japan's Saizen opens in Manila

ROBINSONS RETAIL CORP. COLLABorated with Daiso Sangyo Inc. Japan to open Saizen, a complete one-price retail store.

Located at 3-L, Yuri Lane in Robinsons Galleria, the 800-square meter store hosts over 20,000 functional, fun and handy products from Japan at an amazing price of P99 each item.

Saizen is a Japanese term which means "best choice."

"Saizen joins 25 other international partners of Daiso Sangyo Japan to bring all-original, practical and interesting living ware in a fast-growing, modern and sophisticated Filipino consumer market," said James Go, president of Robinsons Retail Co. II, during the store's launching.

Present during the inauguration were Hirotake Yura, founder and president of Daiso Sangyo Inc. Japan; Masayuki Hatta, senior managing director heading international business and Daisai USA; and Yasuo Shimazaki, Daiso's senior managing Carrots from Mitsubishi Japan.

Undefined head, general manager Manila branch; Shibuyuki Ishiki, treasurer general manager, Manila branch; and Tomoyuki Ishiki, manager Mitsubishi Inc., Tokyo—also present for the occasion.

Representing Robinsons were James Go, JG Summit Holdings Inc. chair and chief executive officer; Lance Gokongwei, JG Summit president and chief operating officer; Robina Gokongwei-Pe, senior vice president and group general manager of Robinsons Retail; and Tommy Lee O, vice president for property management of Robinsons Malls. Actress Megan Young participated in the ceremonial ribbon-cutting rite.

JAPANESE mugs are great gift ideas.

BIG crowd at the recent Saizen launching in Robinsons Galleria

Sunday LIFESTYLE

IN THIS ISSUE
Sea Princess: Myself as a spectacle on TV /G1

The Swiss who turned into a Filipino artist

By Constantino C. Tejero

LIKE THE RENAIS-sance goldsmith Cellini, jeweler Hans Beumann has found a way to elevate his craft to high art. He turns to sculpture.

Of Swiss descent, Beumann came to the Philippines in 1967 on a job offer by La Estrella del Norte in Tondo, and got stuck here since. He so loved the country's warmth, sun and sensibilities, that he chose to become a Filipino citizen in 1970.

With his Swiss-born wife Maria, he has been living in the Philippines for 42 years now, and has become "Jennifer to Manolo's sweetheart."

His atelier is in Legaspi Village

SALE!
REBGMANN
Get your Hairpieces, Wigs, & Hair Extensions at low low prices.

SUMMER AT THE GARDEN
City Garden Hotel

The Swiss who turned into a Filipino artist

From page F1

in Makati City is celebrating its 30th anniversary until July 5, with up to 40 percent discount on his jewelry pieces of gold, platinum and precious stones such as diamond, emerald, ruby, sapphire, pearl, the rare tanzanite. The sale extends to his boutiques at Shangri-La Makati, Rockwell Makati and The Podium.

Twenty-eight years ago, Bonnani tried his hand at sculpture. He fashioned sculptures from black coral combined with 14-karat gold, and the harrow pieces he exhibited in Ayala Museum.

Encouraged by the reception of the show, he pursued his sculptural art. Then he exhibited at The Podium with Mariano Arden Arenas Luis and Joyce Pasigal, proof that he had settled as a full-fledged artist.

Construction art

These nine wood further proof, considering his first exhibit is an art gallery, "Block Up," 14 sculptural pieces in wood and chalk, executed a few years ago in Cecilio Gallery at the grounds of SM Megamall.

Here, combining the lining of Block Up shell (some fragments attached with colored blister paints) and wood (makes, damaging, sacred, Bonnani has created construction pieces which play with contrasting and solid forms.

"In my many years as jeweler, I have worked with mother-of-pearl and seen how it enhances a work of art," he says. "And then I like to create contrasts. I like the idea of marrying the raw (shell) and the cut (wood)."

Here, the natural texture of the wood drills, calmly cut off the iridescent sheen of the shell. Dried white and silvery-gray color against various tones of brown.

"Abstract with Brown Lip" is a series of five composed of layering and interlapping of polished wood slats and shells in three tones of brown (khaki, tobacco and burnt amber), three accented with white irregularly shaped shell cutouts. This is exquisite construction, unquestionably designed to look what appear like bellhops, pergolas, Mondrian paintings.

Evocative interplay

Related to those are the five pieces in the "Abstract" series, assemblages of wood strips linked by an interlocked with glistening mother-of-pearl to evoke Chinese characters, bars, parasols, Japanese text, temple gates, pagodas, chopsticks.

Two related pieces are freestanding sculptures. The first, "Bamboo," is rigid yet elegant, a dark-brown block with the gleaming whiteness of mother-of-pearl evoking bone in motion.

Smaller is its "Box," a bigger block of alternating reddish and dark brown evoking a rectangular bottleclaim.

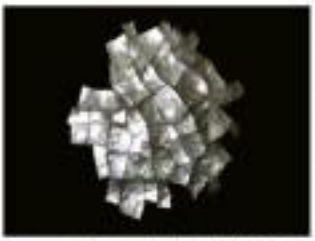
The centerpiece of the collection is the triptych "Passing Clouds," a frame-like construction of 18 teakwood wooden bars linked by two rows of 36 pieces of mother-of-pearl. The tannish brown of the wood subtly plays with the creamy whiteness of the shell mounted by glinting pearls.

Similar to it is "Hidden Goods," but whereas in the former the vertical bars are parallel, here they're arranged at angles, creating an overlay.

"The shell interspersed between wooden blocks, seemingly hiding and then reappearing, creates an interesting interplay which reminds me of clouds," explains the artist.

"FOOT" III

"WILLOW" and, below, "Engraved"



"CRACKED Soil"

Pure aesthetics

Complementing his freestanding sculptures are his wall hangings. With their likeness like grids, these cubist of wood and mother-of-pearl are visually related to Geometrical Abstraction.

Though they have telling titles such as "Abstract," "Linear," "Angles," the perceptive eye, however, can see representation.

"Angles" strongly suggests that is a fetish. Ominous motif of luminescence, while in "Linear" one appreciates the rustic, rural and cut of a boat. "Cracked soil" could be a bird's-eye view of topography.

"Cracked Soil" is just that, the image of a parched land, formed by irregularly shaped pieces of mother-of-pearl recessed and glued together yet left contrasted with uneven edges. The series insists the artwork should be mounted against a dark background, the better to set off its iridescent sheen. "Pale, but tasty, is the Greeley piece.

The wall sculptures may look simple, indeed, yet much has been painstakingly executed. Bonnani designs and two assistants cut and glue the mother-of-pearl panels, with the dark wood underneath forming precise lines and curves.

A 2.8 x 2.8 piece with 1-2 mm wide spacing between panels ("Linear") takes about a month to finish. A 3.0 x 1½ ft piece with up to 8 mm-wide spacing ("Abstract") takes two weeks.

This is pure art—just design and color, texture, craft and no statement. The purity of Bonnani's aesthetics he traces to his training as goldsmith.

Jewelry as sculpture

His early art education started with apprenticeship in Zurich followed by formal education in a trade school for goldsmiths in Germany, where he also learned the basics of printing, drafting, clay modeling. This was continued by self-training.

THE SWISS, F3

Moms laud Jollitown for teaching positive values

Kids are not the only ones enjoying the second season of the hit show Jollitown!

Even moms have continued to find more reasons to delight in Jollitown as it helps them teach their kids good and positive values.

Just like Jenaflerine Tiersio of Pangasinan, who never fails to watch Jollitown with her children and nephews every Sunday. Tiersio shares how watching Jollitown has helped them remain positive and focus on the good things in life. "Dapat sa mga bata ang isang araw ay isang biga rate na napapamuod ito. Sana mas tumagal pa ang programa at maghirty-to-my nay' morning nakakuhang magpamalong and ang mga bata." "It is just right that kids watch this kind of show once a week. I hope that the show will stay longer because kids learn a lot of good values from it."

Delma Ocuto, a 28 year old mom, finds watching Jollitown with her 7 year-old son Philip rewarding. While she makes sure Philip enjoys other activities like playing with his friends and reading, she looks forward to watching an episode of Jollitown with him every Sunday morning.

"Sunday mornings are Jollitown mornings for me and Philip," she said. "He can't get enough of the show that's why I've also tuned in. It's a great way to spend Sunday mornings as a family. In fact, Jollitown has already become one of our favorite family bonding moments," she added.

For 31 year old busy mom Dessa Nevera, she believes she has found the perfect ally in Jollitown. Like most moms who only want the best for their kids, Dessa makes sure little Alex watches television shows like Jollitown that can help her develop a healthy mind.

"Alex just loves watching Jollitown. Not only is it entertaining, it's also very educational," she shared. "I especially liked the pilot episode where Jollitee and the other Jollifriends gave gifts to the Wishing Well. Not only did Alex enjoy watching it, she also learned the importance of sharing and giving to others, and that's a priceless thing to learn especially at a young age."

Indeed, Jollitown has become a breath of fresh air for both kids and parents. Kids delight at the magical world of Jollitown invite them to explore as they learn positive values from Jollitee and the Jollifriends in every episode.

For moms, it's the end to the search for a perfect venue that not only provides their kids worthwhile fun, but also reaches them life's fundamental positive values in a manner they can grasp and enjoy.

Catch Jollitown every from 8:00 to 9:00 am every Sunday morning on GMA7.

Sundays Best at NBC Tent

SUNDAYS BEST AT THE NBC TENT, A SERIES of themed events from May through October, will feature a farmers' market today. Food lovers and organic market regulars will have their fill of fresh vegetables and fruits, appetizers, regional food offerings, international entrées and desserts. There will also be toy games, knickknacks, businesses and more for bargain hunters and shopaholics.

National Book Store will showcase its cookbook line and popular titles and back-to-school items while Cupcake Magazine's Ivan Isadora is slated to show his are the attraction at the ABS-CBN Publishing booth. The American Hospitality Academy Philippines (AHA) will conduct cooking demonstrations throughout the day. There will also be a kids activity area where children can hang out while mommy and daddy shop.

Admission is free. Call 7215500 or e-mail jappinzkent@gmail.com, dgrbsandra@yahoo.com or mail@priyasuccess88@mail.com.

Bridal fair

Festival Supermall in Muntinlupa holds the 2nd Southern Bridal Fair: A Wedding Festival 2009 at the Mitsi Trade Hall and Carousel Court until today. Wedding industry players converge to showcase their services to save-to-marriages, especially those residing in southern Metro Manila.

Serge Jimenez Couture and Bridal Collection will take the lamp in the grand finale today at the Carousel Court of Festival Supermall and p.m. Call Jet Viaje of Festival Supermall Leasing Dept. at 8500016 or Philtrade Exhibits at 7890848, 7894643.

Arts marketing workshop

The International Institute for Film and Arts will hold Arts Marketing Workshop on June 15–19, 1–5 p.m., at LAS 515, Trinidad Bldg., 515 Amalia Ave., Makati City. Denise Mascarenhas, former marketing manager of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, is workshop mentor. Call 81 62206 or 81 6729, 0946-5049615, e-mail iifa.arts.marketing@gmail.com or visit www.iifa.com.ph.

Forum for women

Women ages 16–35 are invited to hue, Headline, and free!, a unique café-forum for young women featuring DJ Sia of Wave 89.1, and Colette Consuelo of Brent International School, on June 6, 6–9 p.m., at the Shekinah Romantic Meditation Center, 7184 Magthaw St., San Antonio Village, Makati City. Limited seats are available in the first 40 callers. RSVP me or before June 1 through 4145431 or 8807860, e-mail queenm@ph.bhsmc.org.

DOT'S EDU JARQUE IS ROTARY AWARDEE

Tourism Undersecretary Edwin Jarque was given recognition by Rotary Club of Manila for helping transform tourism into a vibrant industry. The award was given with the National Association of Independent Travel Agencies. With Jarque receiving the Tourism Personality Award are (from left) Angel Ramos Segovia, Nafea chair; Romeo Batino, NCM president; Shirah Johnson, Nafea president; and Robert Lim Joseph, NCM Tourism Committee chairman and Nafea chairman emeritus. Other awardees are Dino Lopez (Restaurateur Lindhood); City Mayor Jejomar Binay (Local Government); Marcie Manila); Aileen Hsieng (Shopping Tourism); Grace Glory Go, (Media Print); Susan Cala Medina (Media Television); Ruben Tio (Hotel/Resort); Aileen Hubon (Airline Industry); Efren Gonzalez (Pagtour) and Celso Gan Siren Garcia (Local Government Visayas).

Teaching kids to enjoy healthy food

To grow up into healthy adults, good eating habits must begin at childhood. Fortunately, it is never too early to instill in children the appreciation for nutritious food. The challenge lies in making kids known to be picky eaters that healthy food (besides appearing enough, whether they are eating at home or dining out.

"The minds of food that kids eat while they are young mirror their healthy they will be when they get older," points out Glenda Bolot, nutritional coordinator for the Infant and Young Child Feeding Program of the Department of Health (DOH) and a nutritionist. "Whether should prioritize the health of their kids by providing adequate, safe and nutritious foods to avoid malnutrition that can lead to diseases that take can carry into adulthood."

Bolot suggests certain tactics to make kids themselves choose and enjoy food that is good for them.

For one, parents should "train" their children's taste buds to appreciate a variety of flavors. "Like my little, you should get them used to the taste of healthier dishes, as they can learn to appreciate vegetables and fruits more," she advises. Bringing, for example, her vegetables is in but not all children enjoy its sour taste. Children can be made to appreciate even food by giving them calamansi juice or letting them eat on trips to manga.

"Even if they are a little older, you can still influence their food preferences as long as you introduce these tastes wisely and consistently. When they are familiar with the taste, they will start craving for it," she adds.

and Intel, a unique café-forum for young women featuring DJ Sia of Wave 89.1, and Colette Consuelo of Brent International School, on June 6, 6–9 p.m., at the Shekinah Romantic Meditation Center, 7184 Magthaw St., San Antonio Village, Makati City. Limited seats are available in the first 40 callers. RSVP me or before June 1 through 4145431 or 8807860, e-mail queenm@ph.bhsmc.org.

Jubilee card

Vintenimos marks "25 years of being "Your Companion for Life" by gifting its clients the Vintenimos Jubilee Card. Each P500 coupon redeemable purchase of Victorinox pocket knives or fabulous items from any Victorinox outlet automatically entitles one to a P125 Victorinox Jubilee Card which can be used as discount on your next Victorinox purchase from any Cutlery Edge, Kitchen Pro or Zwilling J.A. Henckels showroom. Cutting Edge showrooms are at 2/F Entertainment Mall, SM Mall of Asia; 3/F Greenhill 5, Makati; LG2 Bldg. A, SM Megamall; and 2/L 7Eleven Zwilling J.A. Henckels showrooms are at the Concourse Level, Rockwell; 3/F Entertainment Mall, SM Mall of Asia; and 3/L Hobbycon's Plaza, Ermita, Manila. The Kitchen Pro is at 4/L Shangri-La Mall.

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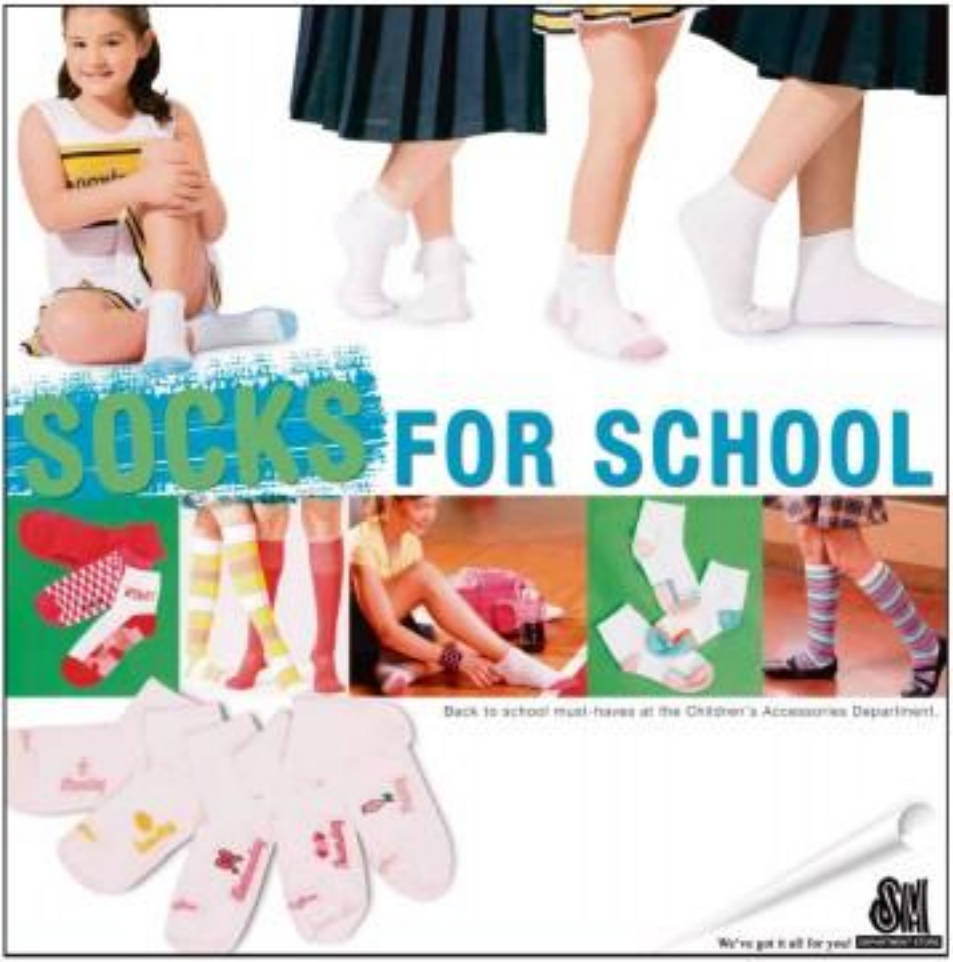

"ANGLES" I

"LINEAR" II

"POLAR Storm"

The Swiss who turned into a Filipino artist

From page F1

At 16, he did oil and watercolor (which he found a "chance" medium), but abandoned painting for jewelry design. His career took off with a stint with Andrew Grima in London, where he immersed in the swinging '60s.

Novelty curios include Frank Gehry, Bedroom Curating, Fernando Bedoya (now exhibiting his eccentric art, "Galaxies, Earth, Sr. Elders and Second Heaven," until June 11, in Mitsyu Gallery, 100 United Nations Ave., Ermita, Manila).

"I don't like art that you can see only for what it is," he says.

Gehry's sculptural architecture—Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Experience Music Project in Seattle, Walt Disney Concert Hall in L.A.—especially informs Brunnarn's jewelry pieces.

Many of them, particularly the rings, statement-size and bracelets, look like miniature sculptures. Some connect on the solidity and hardness of their look, probably due to their geometric design, yet the sure streamlining and sweeping curves give the impression of fluid movement.

Sculpture as jewelry

Brunnarn has several scholars and is training young Filipinos in jewelry design. Lately he has been doing some sketches, landscapes, and says he might return to painting later.

"I'm still very much involved in business," he says.

Added to his smiles and three high-end boutiques is Galerie Marc Brunnarn on the third floor of Greenbelt 5 in Makati City. The year-old art gallery is exhibiting until June 12 "Memory Forms: Tantric Echoes," pieces in cold-cast resin by Agnes Arellano and bronzes by Paolo de Leon.

A recent medium he is experimenting with is stainless steel, in combination, of course, with leather-dyed. With wood, he is now mostly synthetics and bamboo—ably interwoven.

"It's not furniture but small things...bookends, trays, vases," he says. "I've already done 10 pieces. I might exhibit them a year from now."

In this, Brunnarn must be closely following Gehry, who also creates jewelry, sculptures, furniture and household items.

Like Gehry, his art and craft truly meet, producing sculptures that look like gigantic pieces of jewelry. And, indeed, like Gehry, he has blurred the line between craftsman and artist.

"RECTANGULAR" I

"ABSTRACT" II

From no mail to email in 3 easy steps!

NOKIA
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Nokia lets you stay connected anytime, anywhere with email on your phone.

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You'll find most of your existing email addresses are fully supported. Better yet, you can now create a free 2GB email account from Ovi by Nokia.

It only takes 3 easy steps! To start, go to Nokia Messaging Email on your mobile phone.

Discover the convenience of email messaging on these Nokia devices

Nokia 2330 classic

Nokia 2720 fold

Nokia 5000

Nokia 5000 slide

ovi

Sunday LIFESTYLE

It's cool to be Pinoy, and that's true for fashion and interiors—and on high-definition TV, too

Myself as a spectacle on TV

TESSA! Tessa Prieto-Valdes

OSAN of Pinoy Fashion Ben Farrales with his models at Metro Magazine fashion show

SAMSUNG photo winner, designer Rosanna Orosa, and her model Nicole Jacinto at Bridges

RELIGIOSO designers Cleo Dayrit and Yvonne Bagsic with elegant mom Pet Religioso

SUMMER FASHION IS SELLING HOT! And it's even hotter when one sees a hand-dyed designer pieces in one sizzling show.

To celebrate Metro Magazine's 20th anniversary, a monumental fashion show paraded the creations of the country's top 100 talented designers, culminating with the [illegible] of Fashion herself, **Ben Farrales**. According to **Ernie Lopez**, managing director of ABS-CBN Publishing, only Metro Ben could've orchestrated the extravaganza, bringing together all the talents from cutting-edge to classic.

The Samsung-sponsored show was held at the Manila Hotel's new tent. The after-party was at the elegant, newly renovated Champagne Room. Metro's editor-in-chief **Kristine Hultgreen** was quite pleased with the successful event, which was also sponsored by Wilkinks, Eurofurniture and Dilmod.

Samsung seems to be all over these days. At the Samsung 2009 All Resolution "LED—A Whole New Species of Television," the electronics giant introduced the most awaited entering into TV three days. The Samsung LED Full High-definition TV is a techie's dream. Only 1.2 inches thick and 125.6 kilos, the award-winning design could be mounted on a wall like a painting.

Apparently light entering diodes or LED produces darker blacks and crisper whites against vivid colors. It's the sort of viewing experience that lives up to the Samsung slogan: "Like no other."

I was just imagine switching another electronic plug, every Monday at 7:25 p.m., their exciting interior design TV show "Master Life," on a brand-new Samsung LED. And when the show is over, I can watch a DVD or, and this was news to me, view pictures from a computer or Bluetooth through the wireless router.

Full TV

I guess there have really changed since all we did was watch TV. The Samsung LED has, according to the literature, "full DLNA Wireless capabilities which allow streaming to your TV or more than one TV for multi-room entertainment. Samsung's MediaHub 3.0 features a Content Library to access many types of user-installed content such as widgets, art galleries, and even yoga."

I can see myself hanging a Samsung on the wall, and then during a party, clicking on and displaying a cool painting like a Botticelli or something, and that would be more exciting than just having a dead TV in the room. Samsung Electronics Philippines' CEO **Spencer Shim** agreed, saying that Samsung truly combines superb design with superior enjoyment.

The best part of a Samsung event is, of course, the raffle. Corporate marketing head **Glenn Gilongo** got everyone excited as he gave away Samsung digital cameras, SlimFit TVs, LCD TVs and Home Theater Systems to the lucky attendees.

Samsung will reunite with fashion next month when they sponsor an [illegible] show at the CCP Atrium this space for more on

PAGE G2

KULTURA VP Ivy Yap, SM executive Nenia Cocon and Eva Princess

ABS-CBN Publishing managing director Ernie Lopez with Lord with Jenna

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TOP CEBU designers

FUTURE Filipino operations and marketing gang: Marolito Perez, Leo Bognot, Audrey Martinez, Leah Marcos and Jun-Jo Lingon

SAMSUNG gang: Odenie Velarde, Fire Bagos and Tootsy Aragon

Myself as a spectacle on TV

Pretongue 03

Back section

In Filipiniana

Among my summer outfits, I usually don't have much to Filipiniana as I rarely have Pinoy-theme events. So when I was asked to host the opening of Kultura FIL-Iphin, I was in a dilemma as to what to wear.

So the tourism came creative fashion designer Amy Guevara, who had created a gown for me for the Ilonggo theme. I secured the gown into a Filipiniana outfit by matching it with one of the Bulinao terno I liked.

Kultura is a unique lifestyle store, where one can discover and experience Filipino culture at its best. The newly expanded shop at Mall of Asia also has the latest collection from the Ateneidores of Negros Occidental.

It's cool to be Pinoy and that's true for fashion and interiors. Check out Kultura at MOA, SM Megamall and SM San Lazaro, where you'll find sweet ikats from Manila, giant wooden forks and spoons.

TALENTED designer Jun Garcia with Miss Princess wearing his creation

Torch as accessories

My current summer accessories are my torch. As a coffee and red-wine lover, my teeth have been stained through the years. My personal dentist, Dr. Pio Tripon of the Tripon Dental Center Chairo Bldg., 3004 Armate Ave., Mabolo City, 082-3245, told me that even my favorites, chocolate truffles and pomelovara pasta, have color molecules that penetrate and discolor teeth.

His expert recommendation was a kit which take home bleach that includes a personal tray fitted to your teeth and some hydrogen-peroxide cream that releases oxygen into the teeth and breaks down stains. It's quite painless and I didn't even have any sensitive sensitivity. The only drawback is that I had to drink red wine with a straw for a day.

For more instant whitening, Tripon Dental has a one-hour, power or laser-bleaching treatment for that instant, pearly-white smile. It is perfect for a new bride or anyone undergoing a pictorial. Dr. Pio can be reached at tripon_dental@yahoo.com for an extensive list of services, including teeth-enhancing veneers for that perfect summer smile!

DOVE brand manager Gwen's Perez, Teresa Herrera, Sea Princess, Unilever media services manager Mara Valeriano and Dove assistant brand manager Mary Acub

RELAXING at La Spa Emmanuel Peñaranda and Cocoon Magazine editor Liz Bernardo

ASSUMPTION classmates Pepsi Gamboa, Kultura merchant Pinky Nang, Emilia Ferrarotti and Tessa Almagyan

ENJOYING Dove products Agos Rangoso, April Duncan and Carla Shai

Rexona Skin Light with Sunflower Oil Frees Women from Dark Underarms

Dark underarms are the bane of many women's existence. Many have resorted to bleach, but the regular application of these products can irritate sensitive skin and cause embarrassing rashes. It is a constant source of insecurity and frustration for millions of Filipinas, negatively affecting their self-image and confidence.

This makes it good news that now supposed to be completely OK (see-no-Upper Arm-ore). The women are now proud to say underarms that I actually don't want to take my arms down. It's a real in look. I'm so afraid of what people might say.

Rexona Skin Light with Sunflower Oil Skin Lightening Deodorant Spray and Roll-On are now available in Rexona Skin Light Sunflower Oil. Containing the natural properties of sunflower oil, Rexona Skin Light Sunflower Oil helps to prevent the formation of melanin, which causes skin darkening, while also moisturizing skin to keep it soft and supple. Rexona Skin Light Sunflower Oil is available in Rexona's Pure Sunlight collection in the UAE - it helps whiten the underarm skin.

Rexona Skin Light Sunflower Oil Skin Lightening Deodorant Spray and Roll-On are available in leading outlets in the UAE.

According to Dr. Daniel Dael, Unilever Philippines' R&D Skincare Head, Rexona Skin Lightening Center for Underarms and Whole Body, purchase of a pair of Rexona products does not mean that they want to start lightening and lightening activities. By creating a product that can do both, Rexona can provide women and men with the best of both worlds. Rexona's powerful anti-perspirant and deodorant effects ensure that users are protected from underarm odor and wetness, while the skin lightening effects help to prevent the formation of melanin, which causes skin darkening.

Rexona Skin Light Sunflower Oil Skin Lightening Deodorant Spray and Roll-On are available in leading outlets in the UAE - it helps whiten the underarm skin.

Rexona Skin Light Sunflower Oil Skin Lightening Deodorant Spray and Roll-On are available in leading outlets in the UAE - it helps whiten the underarm skin.

Rexona's Key Account Manager Dr. Jovic Mangubat, Unilever's Research and Development Director for Asia Africa, Middle East and Turkey Dr. Daniel Dael and brand manager Angel Sandi highlight some facts about the real cause of dark underarms during the event

Dove

Summer skin glows with love, so the newest launch of Dove Go Fresh! on Ice Spa, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, Dove refreshed, moisturized and energized their special guests with beauty bars, body wash, lotions and deodorants.

Fashion model and yoga diva Teresa Herrera hosted the relaxing event with delicious nibblers and refreshing mojito cocktails. Dove brand manager Bonnie Perez presented two exciting variants: Fresh Moisture, which channels soothing aromas of cucumber and green tea, and Energizing, which boasts stimulating scents of grapefruit and lemongrass.

After a special surprise from Spasenia, guests were offered a delightfully invigorating spa experience at Sa Spa using the new Dove products. And to cap off a day of bliss, Sofitel's executive chef served a pampering dinner with sumptuous bites teeming with fresh and tasty flavors.

Dove's Go Fresh! is perfect for the summer heat and I am excited to give them away at my upcoming party to celebrate 15 years of marriage with my cool husband, Ernesto. But that's next 'till next month, so meanwhile, catch more summer fashion at Philippine Fashion Week at SMX Convention Center. Support our local talented fashion designers!

E-mail the author at sugarmouse@inquirer.com.ph.

DESMARK'S Silvert Chi, Ch. Strong Guimpatan and Ma Lumagas of Dee Appliances, and Dr. Wilson Chi of Chi Ek Sam

EILEEN Silvyar Park, Han Deok Lee, Samsung CTV product manager Nonie Ramirez, and Won Jae Lee

GENERAL manager of Robinson's Appliances Ryan Sison, Jayson Salino and Robinson's Appliances' Michael Tabuday

FAMILY friends Jun Advincula, Joan Mi and Quennie Laurel

HIGH FIVE, manager Steven Yao, Ricky Tolmis and Cleto Vicente

HITS! Sandy Acosta Barreto and editor Katrina Hidpoma

PRINT Calasanz and Paulina Juan

EXPERT dermatician Dr. Pio and Dr. Jane Tripon

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MRS. BO SANCHEZ (center) with benefactors of Grace Love Boro Ministry, Becky and Basil Manat Chua

Shelter welcomes unwed mothers and abandoned babies

HOSPITALS SAD-dled with abandoned unwed teen babies in their maternities can now call Grace Love Boro Ministry in Holy Spirit through Bay Ortega at (0927-505-0605 or Sherna Ortega at 8917 883-9128.

The shelter on 53 Dr. Sixto Antonio Ave. in Ugong-Pasig, was blessed last May 8 by Fr. Ray Bandoc, parish priest of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral.

Unwed pregnant women also now have a place to take refuge—with no questions asked, no dispute required for board and lodging. They are just asked not to abort.

This shelter was made possible by the couple Basil and Becky Manat Chua, who own the building and are giving the place for rent-free. The couple spend P2 million to renovate the place and build rooms. This setting up of the shelter is a dream come true for Bay Ortega and Bo Sanchez of the Light of Jesus Community. Both and Basil Manat Chua founded Bounty for Life Philippines that opposes abortion by praying all four trimester of the Holy Rosary for one hour a week.

How it came about

Bo and Mrs. Sherna Chua came to know about the need for the shelter when Bay Ortega acted as proxy for Bo Sanchez to guest speaker during the third Wednesday Mass of the Bounty for Life last November. Bay cited statistics revealing that there are at least 300,000 abortion in the Philippines in a year. There, he mentioned the need for a shelter for unwed mothers and their babies who will be taken care of by volunteer ob-gyne and pedia doctors.

The following day, Mrs. Chua called Bay to lunch and discussed with him the possibilities of putting up a shelter. Bay, by the way, also runs the Salvator ng Magnanimal Children's Home (an orphanage), so he has experience dealing with the problems of abandoned babies.

Last January, the Chuas met with Sanchez and Ortega, and they decided to put up the shelter.

Those who wish to help in this cause can donate in cash or in kind; diapers, milk, baby clothes, medicines and money to pay for water and electricity. For more info, please e-mail ecstga_cotsdbmss@yahoo.com.

If you urgently need to talk to someone who can help an unwed mother, please call Light of Jesus office at 725-9000, or for counseling, Hotline Espabel at 726-6726.

Rally versus population control bill

Fr. Melvin Castro of the objectives of Tarlac is calling for people to go to the Batasan to rally against the Reproductive Health Bill. Those who cannot go, please pray so life may be preserved.

Josephine Barang

PURELY PERSONAL

San Lorenzo Ruiz in HK

In to second to spread the devotion to San Lorenzo Ruiz among OFWs and Filipino migrants, the San Lorenzo Ruiz Global Ministries is going to Hong Kong on June 7 to bring a 3-5 station of the cross. Fr. Emil Lim, SVD, is the chaplain of the Filipinos community. The driver of Labor attaché Rolando Abad will have an itinerary and brought straight to Ambassador Claudio when Fr. Emil will bless the image.

Philippine Ambassador to Singapore Mirela Colagulan. Cesar told our others we were there last May 6 that "the world has gone borderless, so that people now move from place to place of their choice."

This speaks of Filipinos now living and working in different parts of the world. With an agreement to God like San Lorenzo Ruiz, our OFWs will bravely face what awaits them wherever they are.

Who is San Lorenzo Ruiz? Lorenzo Ruiz was a layman, married and had two sons and a daughter. He was born in Binondo (converted to Binondo) and educated by the Dominicans. He was working as an "scribano" for the parish when he was accused of killing a Spaniard. To save his life, his Father Confessor advised him to sail with some Dominican priests going to Nagasaki, Japan in 1636. While there, the pagan authorities told him to renounce his faith. Lorenzo refused.

He and his companions were tortured. San Lorenzo died on Sept. 28, 1637. Pope John Paul II came to Manila to beatify him on Feb. 18, 1981. Fr. Rene Dias, founding chair of this ministry, was present at the Lucena during the beatification.

When Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz was canonized on Oct. 18, 1987, Fr. Rene went to Rome for the canonization. In 1988, he began the propagation of the devotion in New York and San Jose. Glen was the first "lorenzano" mayor." Fr. Lorenzo the book "On the Road with San Lorenzo Ruiz," published by UST Press. Available at National Bookstore; site one.0917.8718826 for copies.

Those who want novena prayers to San Lorenzo Ruiz can write to me c/o the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Pasong Tamo ave., Makati City. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope for easier mailing.

Today is the feast of Our Lady of the Visitation. Appropriate that I am writing about the Grace to be Born Ministry. Happy Feast Day Marian Mary.

Foundation holds fundraising Santacruzan

THE CLOVERS FOR LIFE FOUNDATION counts with a large group of Cebu's top designers. Not since a decade now, they have been involved with a grand Santacruzan. It is a showcase as much for Filipiniana as for inventiveness. The first time they did one was together with the Cebu Plaza Hotel in 2008.

Amparito Lhuillier was Reina Emperatriz, escorted by Ingrid Sala Sacramento and Teresita Mendezona. The Cebu Plaza closed down, and the Santacruzan was discontinued. It was reorganized three years later with a ready partner in the hotel, Bistro and Bellas—the Santacruzan of Cebu (HSBAC).

Spearheading it was the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel whose general manager, Mario Pronio, is the HSBAC president. The Santacruzan then became a fundraiser whose main beneficiary is the Philippine Widows Society. Clothes for Life is the unique name of the funds for its charity projects.

After the revival, the title of Reina Emperatriz has been held by Cebu Governor Gwen Garcia, Ayie Cesario's mother Elvira Lo Yu, Cebu City First Lady Margot Osmeña, and Mandaue's Salvador Quisumbing-Perdiz, Cebu's most distinguished philanthropist.

This year, the Santacruzan proved to be the most spectacular. Mayor Osmeña personally rose to it, being hands-on as to plans, protocol, program organizers, and a thousand other details. The event started with a 4 p.m. Mass on Saturday, May 9, followed by the procession through the waterfront driveway.

Miss Cebu Kris Jansson led the way as Reina Banderada. They came 16 angelas and reinas. Trixie Gullas made a stately Reina Elena, and Marguerite Lhuillier dazzled one and all as the Reina Emperatriz. The procession closed with an entourage of Our Lady of Mantaray, decidedly feminine a palanquin and surrounded by children dressed as angels.

Congratulations are due Cesbre for Life president Shirley Bacolor and his vice president Cory Santiago, who was the event chairman. Cory was ebullient about the participants and their designers making it the miles on here a Philippine town should be organized. Most concerned followed.

THEY all signed as Reina Emperatriz is pure Sanrocruzans: Elvira Lo Yu, Ingrid Sanrocruz, Amparito Lhuillier, Teresita Mendezona and Margarita Yeung

Fabre Pacarro

Grand entrance

Further appearance to take a closer look at the colors and regalia and what the reinas chose for the dinner later at the hotel's main ballroom. Every girl made a grand entrance as her name was called. On the wide stage, dancers were prepared for all of them.

On a special row were the former Reinas Emperatriz who had come on this occasion: Amparito, Ingrid, Teresita, Elvira and Margarita. Dinner was served and they all came down to join their respective tables filled with family and friends. Aside from Iris, Telesa and Marguerite, taking part in the Santacruzan were the following:

Baiyia Dolan as Reina de las Flores; Mona Bernares, Reina Mendoza, Yasmin de Mendoza, Reina de los Angeles; Maricelle de la Torre, Reina del Mundo; Jennifer Palcuto, Reina de las Virgenes; Nenita Bolcone, Reina Divinagracia; Maria Ruby Cuizon, Reina del Cielo; Ms. Carmen Vergara, Reina del Sol; Natalia Holgacia, Reina de las Estrellas; Berdymie Garcia, Reina de la Luna; Kathleen Lim, Reina de la Aurora; Reinas de la Abundancia-Javanga, Selma de la Makara; Elvira Sadic, Reina del Rosario; Krizia Dalisa, Reina de las Sparrow; Ms. Lydia Lee, Reina de las Condecoras; Carole de Leon, Reina de las Palmas; Tenorrose Sato, Reina de la Pradera; Stephanie Sofaico, Reina de los Corazones; Sharon Mejia, Reina Pet; Krystine Limlo, Reina Paz; Shaylene Fuentes, Reina Caridad; Charlene de Guzia, Reina Esperanza; Charlene Cadil, Reina de Agni; Rose Dardas, Reina Libertad; Charlene Yu, Reina Esther; Jennifer Orgbida, Reina Veronica; Hannah Hanson, Reina Fe; Grace Colmenares, Reina Solidad; Alexander Chilini, Maria Magdalena; Anna Ores, Reina Judith; Michaela Cavan, Reina Sharbe; Ruby Penaso, Reina Mora; Elaine Lu, Reina Samaria; Angel Lazano, Reina Asenia; and Edu Mendigo, Reina Abigaela.

Plans for the HSBAC/Cebu for Life Santacruzan 2010 are already underway. Cary Santiago is in the thick of it since he is the group's incoming president. He did a good job on Magnificio Lhuillier's which grows that year, a veritable work of art.

Baseball thrills Sala said he Reina Emperatriz 2010, unanimously chosen by Amparito, Ingrid, Teresita, Elvira, Margarita and Marguerite. And Pamfilo, in turn, has already remembered a masterpiece from Cary.

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Sunday LIFESTYLE Relationships

Lessons from 'Tita Chito'

By Marge Enriquez
Contributor

EDELA Gonzales Montinola

SUSANA Madrigal-Edaqan

CHITO Madrigal-Collantes. "What I learned from her was to do things in stages," says Lhuillier.

THE LATE CONSUELO "CHITO" Madrigal-Collantes had a magnetism rooted in spunk and maturity. Those close to society's grand dame remember her as a nurturing and giving person, full of wit and wisdom.

There was no difference between her public and private self, they say. She was the same person to different people, across ages and classes. Her generosity and candor awards people as a genuine display of the best within her.

Last May 18, she would have been 88. (Even in her twilight years, Collantes didn't disclose her age.)

Susana "Chuchie" Madrigal-Edaqan recalls how her aunt wouldn't want to give her age in an interview.

"But I said any age, just turn," she says.

The fact that Collantes felt she had a right to turn her cancer revealed the intimate relationship Collantes had with Edaqan and her cousin, Gloria "Ging" Gonzales-Montinola.

The daughter of the industrialist Vicente Madrigal—whose businesses included shipping, real estate, cement and banking—Collantes was a lawyer and a socialite before she became an entrepreneur and philanthropist.

"What I learned from her was to do things in life in stages. It's certain stages...Focus. She was a daughter, a director, social director of Ayala and sportswoman. She became active in business in her late 50s and 60s," says Montinola.

The family businesses having reached their peak, Collantes followed her interests and sold them. For her business accomplishments, she received honorary degrees from Ateneo and La Salle.

In the last decade of her life, Collantes divorced her estranged husband.

Not quantifiable

On their relationship with their aunt, Edaqan says it could not be quantified.

"If I ask you about your mother's love, how would you describe it? That's what it was. She didn't have children. She took us in like her own child."

After college in the US, Edaqan lived with her aunt for 11 years, since her parents Antonio and Amanda were abroad. In the '80s, staying in Collantes'

LESSONS /E2

Last May 18, Chito Madrigal-Collantes would have been 88. Two nieces fondly remember

'That old feeling

MANUEL and Chito Gallaston on a happy couple, in pi-leria and in public

FORMER FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER Manuel Gallaston was, to the very end, a deeply devoted husband to the late Luisma Camacho "Chito" Madrigal, whom he first met in Washington in 1964.

Gallaston died last Thursday at age 93, the day as if by coincidence, there is the May 18 birth anniversary of Mrs. Gallaston.

In an interview, about two decades ago, wife's long (theater Magazine (now Inquirer' editor-in-chief) published in Panorama, Gallaston recalled how nervous, Madrigal "sparked a desire deep down in me for Chito. That old feeling never died."

A longer excerpt from that interview:

"I would like to spoil Chito," says the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Manuel Gallaston, the durable, dapper bachelor and the man in Chito's life. Asked what he has chosen to be tested rough all this time, he replies: "I have been taught by my parents to be independent and marry only when I can afford to. I'll marry a rich woman."

He adds: "I would marry Chito now but for the obstacles." Chito is working for an annulment of her marriage...

In the meanwhile, the waiting may be a bit much, considering that he married decades ago. It was 1961 he first met Chito in Washington. She was a law student and he, counsel attorney in the office of the commissioner. "She had an unusual boy friend," recalls Gallaston. "A Filipino first, that did not seem to be a responsible alliance. I felt she deserved a more mature man."

THEN five-year Affair: Undersecretary Manuel and Chito Gallaston with Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi

Chito's women? "I practically grew up in the States and the very first time I saw Manuel I knew he was the one for me. They even quarrel like a wedded couple. Mounting jewelry pieces are what Chito has taken charge of the busy officialism of Luisa Hall at the Foreign Affairs department on Padre Faura. Explains Chito: "Angel Nadpil will be the architect and we hope to make the hall-time use of the major events auditorium in the country."

Lessons from 'Tita Chito'

Photograph #1

Stephen Park home made some since Edagar backboard work at Citibank.

She and Montalcos know their aunt's mentor by heart.

"She worked very hard. She'd wake up at 7. If you drop 'til 9 a.m., she'd call you to go," says Edagar.

Gallaston would invest in her calendar and on do-list, check mornings, and play golf in the afternoon. After 7 p.m., business or shopwalk was not allowed.

"If there was an issue you wanted to discuss, she'd say, 'Don't talk to me.'" By then, she would have her lunch and been driven home before dinner.

If Gallaston liked Edagar's dress, she would lend jewelry and make sure her niece looked chic. Sometimes Edagar feared she might lose the privacy, but her aunt wasn't that attached to material things.

"She'd say 'If they get lost, then they are lost.' It was her way of saying 'Free Fan and don't worry.'"

When Edagar gave birth, Gallaston was waiting outside the operation room with her mother, her eyes moist with tears (and she rarely cries). Pointing that the baby could be mistaken in the nursery, she urged Edagar's mother to keep an eye on the newborn.

"She had such a big heart. If you loved her, you wanted to please her," says Edagar.

After Edagar was diagnosed with ovarian cyst, she told her aunt she would go to the States. Heeding her intuition, Gallaston dropped her plans from undergoing surgery here. Since she was going to the US, she asked Edagar to come along and get a second opinion. It turned out the cyst was benign and merely needed a yearly check-up.

Close relationship

Montalcos lived with Gallaston from the time she was six months old until she was three. First after her mother, Pedro Madrigal Gonzales-Mena, took her back, since and most maintained a close relationship throughout years.

When she took the bar exams and for further tests in the US for surgery Montalcos lived with her aunt again.

Gallaston got her nieces involved in the family businesses.

"For business deals, you go to the meeting with her. The boss thing, she'd exercise now to deal with the persons. The amounts would get bigger, their she'd delegate. She was very selective and didn't want to waste her energy," says Montalcos.

In documents that required modification of people in case of emergency Montalcos always names her aunt's name, aside from her husband's.

"We were always there for you, to New York, we'd travel, have dinner and go shopping. If you had a big decision to make, you could because it all her. She would accompany her also respected your privacy. She was very careful in dealing with people. This Chito cared about you and your children up to the time she died. These are things you could never repay."

Edagar adds, "I never had to want anything, she'd give it, whether it was something expensive against advice. She'd say go probe. With a mothery eye, she knew what you had a problem."

Deaths in the family

Last year was tough for Montalcos and Edagar, who lost their respective mothers. The deaths of Amanda Madrigal, Pacita Abaya and Gallaston happened only within a few months of each other.

At the time of Amanda's death, Gallaston's health was declining and she had been hospitalized for a few weeks. So they might not break the news to her until. At the wake in her parents' house in Quezon City, Edagar was commissioned by her aunt to Forbes Park.

Asked about funerals, Edagar had to reveal that her mother had been cremated, and requested her sister not to go to Quezon City. Gallaston couldn't be stopped and, in her fragile condition, paid her last respects to Amanda.

Although Gallaston loved company, she never majored on her nieces. She would hugs indifference with a dismissive "Run

THE young Chito Madrigal with baby nieces Gisela, then 6 mos. old, and Susana. The photo (in their library) is Susana and grandmother

Hans T. Sy Leads National U Commencement Rites

Members of the National University graduating class of 2008-2009 were recently honored during the 2009 National University Annual Commencement Exercises, held recently at the Cornerstage of the SM Mall of Asia.

In his Commencement Address National University Board of Trustees Chairman T. Sy encouraged the graduates "to play the part of the bigger picture, to believe there is a brighter day before that every set counts."

"Life is enriched with kindness, and we need less every opportunity to do good," he added. He said the event as a "new beginning" for the graduates, whom he referred to as 'the Regiments of the New World, who have a 'responsibility that now extends to your whole family ... your community ... your country ... and the world."

Chairman Sy also told the graduating class that the future "is really in your hands. Get excited about it. Believe in yourself enough to know your strengths, and to harmonize, to accept and work with what you cannot do. Be humble in success, resilient in failure."

The venue for the graduation, the SM Mall of Asia, was one of the many changes mandated by the new partnership with the SM Group of Companies. The SM Group recently acquired majority ownership of National U and since then has given its all out support to help strengthen National U as an institution with new infrastructure, equipment, and focus on academic excellence.

"I hope you share this excitement over this partnership," said Chairman Sy, stressing that in the first commencement exercises to be held since National U officially became a part of the SM Group. "and the many plans we have lined up and the progress we are making with the various improvements that your university is undertaking. You, as this year's graduates, are the active part of the new chapter in National U's history."

The ceremonies were attended by the five hundred (500) graduating students of various programs and their families. It was also attended by National U officials headed by President Teodoro J. Cruzpo, the administrative deans, faculty and by the National University Alumni Association Foundation, Inc., board members, Dr. Peter O. Lim. Loyalty and academic awards were also given.

Enrollment is now ongoing at National U for SY 2009 - 2010. Registrants can avail of Free Entrance Exams. Please contact the Admissions Office at 703-1001 or 742-8242, or visit the National U Website at www.national-u.edu.ph for details.

'She wanted people to be pr

By Marge C. Enriquez
Contributor

AFTER FIFTEEN AGES, DR. LEILANI Dowsey, dubbed "The Healing Priest," delivered a homily on how this jet-lagged could use their wealth to benefit society, this audience the affluent parishioners of Missions to de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati.

Showing his experience in helping poor communities in Bicol, he asked for more funding to continue his cause.

At the audience was the billionaire, secretary sponsor and philanthropist Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Gallaston, who was apparently moved by his speech. After the Mass, she sent her assistant to the priest in the sacristy.

When the priest explained his education program in Sorsogon, Gallaston donated P1 million to build his school. Not even her most intimate sisters, shopping executive Susana "Chuchu" Madrigal-Schupp and lawyer Gisela "Ging" Gonzales-Montalcos, were aware of their aunt's contribution.

Anti-poverty thrust

Four morning passed the way for the establishment of the Consuelo Quiros Madrigal Foundation (CQMF), whose anti-poverty thrust is carried out through its housing, microfinance, tourism, education and scholarship programs.

The foundation was established in 1997. Gallaston's charity-giving started long before it, traditionally before younger days. Gallaston sent children of household help or acquaintance to school. When they became successful in their careers, they would reciprocate by helping out the generosity. Gallaston wouldn't even remember the help she had extended.

In 2004, the CQMF became a reimbursement organization.

"The Chito wanted it to be more focused. After succeeding in business, she had reached the stage in her life when giving back was her primary focus. She began contacting people she had faith in," says Montalcos.

She found new cousins of Ethiopia, chairperson, treasurer, president, corporate secretary and lawyer Christopher Garcia, Sissy Pecaris and granddaughters Jen Jen Ruffles.

"Before class holding the foundation from the ground, we thought it would be quicker to help jobless who had parishes and ideas for programs," says Montalcos.

Fr. Joel Tabora, president of Antero de Diego, and Fr. Wilbert Tolentino of CQMF's programs in Bicol, while Fr. Jose Maria Cadlit oversees Bulacan.

"It was the most fun so," says Montalcos of Gallaston' anointed ones. "All the money would go directly to the poor. There were no layers or agenda. She was doing it personally not for any publicity."

In some interviews, Gallaston always expressed her vision of helping "the poorest of the poor" and investing their dignity not through dole-outs, but by teaching skills and providing the means to make them self-reliant.

She bankrolled Socorro "Cielo" Barcelona to be CQMF's executive director. Barcelona recalls: "She wanted to give the good to each person by alleviating poverty, but instead with Christian principles."

A management contract with Bantayog Center Building Family Values Foundation to run CQMF was forged. "Everything we can pay the foundation goes to her foundation, not her salary. That is where The Chito's business mind is at work. It is the lowest administrative cost in the Philippines," says Montalcos. The members of the board of trustees and patrons are witnessing.

Barcelona designs, monitors and evaluates the programs and coordinates with the board. The foundation's main thrust is to carry out the 11 point plan for Bicol. Tita Lucia, Socorro and the Pajotes [illegible]

Campus, a learning hub or a "

Fruits of service

In the past five years, the [illegible] has already seen the fruits of [illegible] with more than 25,000 beneficiaries.

When Edagar visited Bicol [illegible] Father Wilmer reported that CQ[illegible] tually helped 7,000 families—[illegible] tails...through microfinancing [illegible] scholars. Of the 46 scholars from [illegible] five, some have become achievers [illegible] Ateneo, Assumption, Adbol [illegible] Green Paul Bicutti and Arthur Sa[illegible] of whom are magna cum laude [illegible] of nurse-de biga.

In Bulacan, the graduates [illegible] good jobs and now help support [illegible] Bicol, such as Administrative Officer [illegible] at Manulife; Christina Adje-el [illegible] room of Public Works and Highways [illegible] belle Bicutti of Allied Laboratories; Jade Anthony Valenzuela, a financial [illegible] at Unicef.

Students with full scholarships [illegible] an investment if they write a thank-you [illegible] more recently. It's gets good reactions [illegible] nevertheless' sees fruits. FOSEL [illegible] only beneficiary is Danilo Odon [illegible] sorts registrar dried fish and [illegible] go to Texas through [illegible] scholarship.

never died'

made it care, I screamed...Is that a Hippies?'...I used to chastise Marcelling on his choice."

Collantes claims that first meeting sparked "a desire deep down in my life" Claire. That old feeling never died." So, getting together after Claire's marriage broke up was really like "picking up where we left off."

Claire and Marcelling make an unlikely pair, their outgoing, he's reticent; she is extroverted, he looks like a sweetpea most of the time. The Belgian architect-artist's wife once remarked to Claire: "I see now in the undercurrent or a dinner party and he didn't say one word to me that I cried when I got home. But ever since you've been going out with him, he talks more."

Such remarks obviously please Claire who says that her man "is sad till he himself," to which Marcelling agrees. Claire perks up to explain what it is the much restaurant has going for them. "It's a marriage of the minds. When we quarrel, we ignore and reason out and really talk out the problem. If I am wrong, I admit it." Something, Claire adds, that's hard for her to do, being a "strong personality".

"I have a strong character too," says Collantes. "I do not bow down to anyone when it comes to my principles, not even to the highest person in the land, but Claire is something else. I am very proud of her. She is personality-plus. In my present position, I need someone like her."

But can he afford the girl he wants to marry? Marcelling casually grows mad and said two years, breaks out into a devilish laughter, saying: "The trouble with Claire is that she has too much money." That's the kind of trouble that should delight the likes of us.

oductive'

EXECUTIVE director Socorro Bautista (center) with Gloria Goco-Hontiveros Montinola and Socorro Madrigal-Edeza

"Sta Clara feels a lot about working. As a business venture, she wanted the money to be used again and again. It was used many times. It would come back for the purpose of being lent out. But over time, we realized that, in some cases like maybe monetary feeling, you can't expect some one reason," says Montinola.

"But that is necessary," adds Edeza. "Kasi won't go to school if there is no lending."

CGMF has adopted schools and has eaters for its nutritional program.

During Christmas, the beneficiary children from Bulacan, who formed a choir, would regale Collantes in a mini-concert in her home.

Unique program

Edeza points out that the foundation's feeding program is unique because of its size.

"There's no subsidized housing. You purchase a 300-sq m lot and build a 60-sq m house. Since you own the land, it can hardly ever you home. In that lot, there is never vacant, organic farming or bakery."

The foundation donated a nine-hectare property to Bantay, Sorsogon, to provide housing for beneficiaries.

Edeza cites a school teacher who thanked him for the way. He owes no part program. What the teacher saved on rent went to the organic farming in her lot. Her husband, who works in Saudi Arabia, plans to come home to help in the business.

A baker who once worked in a hotel also set up a bakery in his house. He now provides bread to neighboring communities.

In the footsteps of Parsons, the CGMF offered its 7.5-hectare property as a learning and livelihood hub to cover children's learning, canteen, computers, teacher training, cultural concern and a multipurpose area. The Nuestra OSB Doña Gregoria project will be launched this school year.

Although most of the funding comes from the late Collantes' cockswainer, Montinola says the foundation plans to move forward to work with partners.

"To grow, we want to collaborate with many people. There are ways of working that don't involve money."

For the Parsons learning hub, Bautista says Don Bosco will be in charge of the computer program, since it is a renowned vocational site, to find's Manila will help make the curriculum for cultural courses. For teachers' training, the University of Asia and the Pacific will share its expertise in Values Education geared for public school teachers. Corporations such as Ayala Land have also ventured in local studies, while DMCI will be the general contractor.

In the last two years other Mr. Collantes brought organizations the projects.

"One year will go to Barry 39," says Montinola. "She knows her health was failing. Sir, she was happy to see that what she had hoped for was being realized."

"She wanted people to be productive, and she instilled discipline," adds Edeza. The CGMF, she says, embodies her late man's ingredient honesty and integrity.

"We will make sure that she will live through the foundation. Her memory will be kept alive."

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DEL VILLAR-LORENZANA

Pablito Kamil del Villar, son of Pablito Jr. and Carmencita del Villar, and Erika Mae Lorenzana, daughter of Antonio and Olivia Lorenzana, will exchange wedding vows on June 5 at Immaculate de San Antonio Parish in Forbes Park, Makati. The cocktail and dinner receptions will be held at The Peninsula Manila. Del Villar is an associate for Global Equity Derivatives at Deutsche Bank AG at Wall Street in New York. Lorenzana is an operations analyst for Finance Development at the World Bank in Washington, DC, but will soon move to the World Bank's New York office as a counselor for World Bank-United Nations Human Development Affairs. The couple will reside in Piscataway, New Jersey, after the wedding.

CAPERAL-CARPIO

Lawyer Cedrick Caperal, son of Harries and Wilmelda Caperal, recently tied the knot with lawyer Catherine Carpio, daughter of Carmelito and Dr. Aldecon Carpio. Caperal works at Santiago Cruz & Santa Lara Offices while Carpio works at Padilla Asuncion Abu-Mcgrilles Muro Carpio. The wedding was held at St. Jerome Parish, San Jose, Mindoro, while reception was at Jardin de Miramar, Antipolo.

CRISOSTOMO-DEBUT

Amelyn Rose Crisostomo is a third year student at the University of Santo Tomas taking up Financial Management. The only daughter of Nat and Lea Crisostomo, she will celebrate her 18th birthday at Sofitel Philippine Plaza Hotel on June 12. She will wear a corseted ballgown designed by Rimeri Santos. Elegant Event Specialist will coordinate the event with a musical concert theme.

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the lifestyle section, PO. Box 2233 Makati Central Post Office 1260 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

CARPIO-REYES

Cecesia Mae Reyes, daughter of Rustico Sr. and Bibi Reyes, recently exchanged marriage vows with Jimuel Carpio, son of Ernesto and Zenaida Carpio, at the Municipal Hall of Marikina City. Reception followed at Chowking in SM Marikina. Bernie and Connie are Chowking managers.

SILLA-DEBUT

Anne Jeffrese D. Silla, daughter of Roger Balleser Silla and Florencia Abalos de la Cruz, will cele-

brate her 18th birthday on June 20 with a grand ball at the CBE Hotel, Angelo King Bldg., De La Salle College of St. Benilde, Manila. Event specialist Alec M. Ilustre of Kronica Plus will coordinate the Hollywood-theme party. The debutante will wear a one-piece, silver-grey five-layer headbust gown of hairy, metallic rhoulla fabric and shimmering silk with tea beads on the upper torso accentuated by a geometric collar bedecked with crystal-cut stones designed by Xiao Lin.

HAIR! Anniversa. Rizer's Carmen, Juliet and Guinevere are some of Edgar Allan's inspirations for his creations.

Edgar Allan's bridal tribute to icons of history and fashion

FASHION DESIGNER EDGAR ALLAN MOLDITE A special exhibit of wedding gowns inspired by some of the most memorable women of history, literature, film, sports and fashion. Edgar Allan's contemporary flair to interpret bridal gowns for iconic women of history like Marie Antoinette and Mata Hari; Rizer's Carmen and Broadway's Eliza Doolittle from "My Fair Lady"; romantic literature's heroines, Juliet and Guinevere; and celluloid's memorable characters, Princess Leah and Gigi.

With minimal couture decorations, Edgar relied on fabric, cut and proportion to create the glamour that surrounded these women of history and fiction, and capture the drama that made them memorable and bigger than life. This special exhibit will be the 15th bridal display Edgar and business partner Wren Tiongco have mounted in their 25-year-old boutique in Ayala Center. It is also Edgar's most personal and aesthetically fulfilling bridal collection. With the cooperation of Ayala Center, the exhibit will run June 4-14 at the lobby of Glorietta 3, Ayala Center's newest commercial edifice (between Rustan's and Hotel InterContl, and where the new Edgar Allan boutique is located.

OKTO Madrigal-Collantes with her nephews and nieces on Christmas 1986

Lessons from 'Tita Chito'

From page H1

Kaye." He, one of them would invariably end up keeping her company.

In 2004, when Collantes was confined in the hospital due to pneumonia, her nieces spent the first night looking after her. The doctor recommended a respirator to help ensure proper breathing. Collantes refused because of the discomfort, but the nieces insisted despite her protests.

"She realized we cared for her deep enough to defy her supposed wishes," says Montinola. Collantes was eventually grateful that the respirator extended her life, allowing her to see the establishment of a foundation dedicated to her family's causes.

"She never let things get her down. Even when she had emphysema, she'd go to Hong Kong. When she had no voice left, she still traveled and made sure the plane had oxygen, and brought the people she needed. She got excited about Chinese food, and she still bought her cupcakes," recalls Montinola.

Favored kin

Among her nephews and nieces, Edwina, Montinola and Gaston Pilapil, her grandnephew, seemed the most favored. Gaston was like a son to Collantes.

Montinola maintains: "To the end, we are not overt people. Tita Chito was more than generous. When you are close in innocent, honestly, I don't need to be anybody's heir apparent."

Before she died last February 2008, Collantes was able to express her last wishes.

"She wanted to give her wealth's possessions to certain people. She also wanted to be remembered for her goodness, and for her foundation to continue," says Montinola.

"Her lipids says it all. 'Blessed with beauty, grace and talent, she loved and is beloved by all whose lives she continues to touch.'"

THE YOUNG Chito Madrigal with nieces Susie Reyes and Mary de Leon, and Bia Pilapil

ABOARD the Presidential yacht: Collantes standing beside Prince Juan Carlos de Borbon, Edith Ralon, Melay Cojuangco, Baby Arnaiz, Ella Peñaloza, Lala Theis and Wiley Madrigal

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Lolit on Hayden: Crocodile tears

LOLIT Solis

By Marinell R. Cruz

LOLIT SOLIS IS STAYING ON the warpath for now, even as, she says, Vicki Belo tried to intercede for "former" boyfriend Hayden Kho in the face of her rape.

Solis told Inquirer Entertainment on Thursday that Belo gave her a birthday party week before last, seeking "a second chance" for Kho.

"She was crying," Solis said. "She asked if I could please just meet with Hayden. I was insulted... so I agreed. I hoped to hear him say he was sorry for what he did to Katrina and all those other women."

Solis is the publisher of tabloid Bandera, which first filed a complaint against Kho before the National Bureau of Investigation due to the proliferation of a sex video that Kho recorded allegedly without her permission.

Several such videos of Kho with different women, including Cebuana starlet Katrina Halili, are circulating on the Net and being sold on DVDs—and has prompted an ongoing, closely monitored Senate inquiry.

"I met with Hayden face-to-face," Solis continued. "I love Vicki [and] I know she's suffering because of all this. I was disappointed with Hayden. Instead of saying he's sorry, he blamed Katrina for allegedly giving him drugs. He also said Marlene Bryan, an ex-girlfriend supposedly in one of the videos[women] him back because he has money now."

Solis especially read the way Kho blamed everyone but himself: "He said we shot Erik Cleo star-mistress because his [Kho's] life has greatly improved. He said this was why Cleo [a real, longer] made the videos public. He never [owned up]. Erik and the other women—they managed [to]. That's how Hayden sees it."

"Where is his sense of gratitude?"

Where Kho stands himself available for interviews with TV talk and print reporters, Solis said, he was merely trying to win sympathy. "He should [admit] in an affidavit that he is at fault and that

LOLIT 9

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Sharon, KC lead Star Awards winners

By Rayan San Diego Jr.

THE PHILIPPINE MOVIE Press Club (PMPC) handed out trophies for the Star Awards for Movies, now on its 27th year, at the Henry Lee Irwin Theater of the Ateneo de Manila University on Thursday.

It was a night of mothers and daughters, according to PMPC.

Megastar Sharon Cuneta won Best Actress for "Caregiving," while daughter KC Concepcion won Best New Movie Actress for her debut film appearance in "For the First Time."

Cuneta and KC, however, were not around to receive their trophies because they are in the United States for a concert tour.

Snooky Serna won Supporting Actress for "Tinapalan," while co-star Dennis Marasigan tied with Emilio Garcia of "Pitbulang Kuwatic" for Supporting Actor.

9 awards for 'Balot'

Juliet Dagoy, the studio prodigy in "Bonta," won Best Child Actor. Sherwin Ordoñez won New Movie Actor for "Balot."

In the film section, Best Movie went to "Bonta," which won eight other trophies—including Director (Mark Meily), Actor (Jericho Rosales), Screenplay (Ray Iglesias), Cinematography (Lee Meily), Sound Engineer (Dinky Agulto), Production Design (Jopel F. Sunico), Original Theme Song (Edith Gallardo and Louie Ocampo) and Editing (Jimmy Abesamis).

The only other award in the film section that didn't go to "Balot" is Musical Score which Jessie Lasaten won for "Pisang."

4 trophies for 'Yanggaw'

In the digital section, the Director Ong Punzalan's "Yanggaw" brought home four trophies—including Best Picture, Director (Richard Somes), Cinematography (Hermann Claravall) and Lyle Sacdo and Production Design (Michael Ilagan). Donald Cuenca, Pandoy Cuenca).

Somes told Inquirer Entertainment that he is thankful to be given a chance to make a small film with the best actors of our time. More than anything,

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Lolit...

From page 1

be a successful. He should just everything in black and white. Maybe then I could believe his crying remorseful."

Solo noted that Elvis's mother lives in a TV news interview, had likewise blamed overseas for his ruin. "She bit me. Sue Bong for the ratbreeze."

Perella, in a privilege speech on May 18, called Ilbo a "president (and a) person of the highest kind." The legislator also called for the revocation of Ilbo's license as editor.

She was said to her friend Bels, who tried Ilbo "Shelly" Irde said.

She stated, "We did all those irresponsible things[] on the bed that he shared with Bels. Never mind if he didn't love Shill as much as she loved him. Nasasaktan ang inang na hindi nya (Pillow is his sister of gratitude)? He buy a condo, a car and a 1500,000 sacrifice insurance from Bels falsified Gina."

To subsequent interviews, Ilbo denied receiving such a hefty monthly allowance from Bels.

Sharon, KC ...

From page 1

It's very heartening."

Other winners in the digital section are: Sound Engineering, Jerbee Joaquin and Ronald Jan for "Guerrero"; Musical Score, Jeanlene Hidalgo for "Bond"; Theme Song, Arvin Tan for "Hayahay"; Screenplay, Dan. Evangelista for "Hayahay"; Editing, Noemi Sevilla for "Boksingero" and Direk Gutierrez, Jay."

Special awards for Cinemanic Excellence in Animation were given to the producers of "Enyo" (Lemuel Lejo) and "Hijodaje" (APT Entertainment).

Screenwriter Ricky Lee received the Makisig Achievement award, given to 1992's "Himala," which topbilled Nora Aunor and was also listed the Best Asia-Pacific Film of All Time in a poll conducted by CNN Interview.

Full force

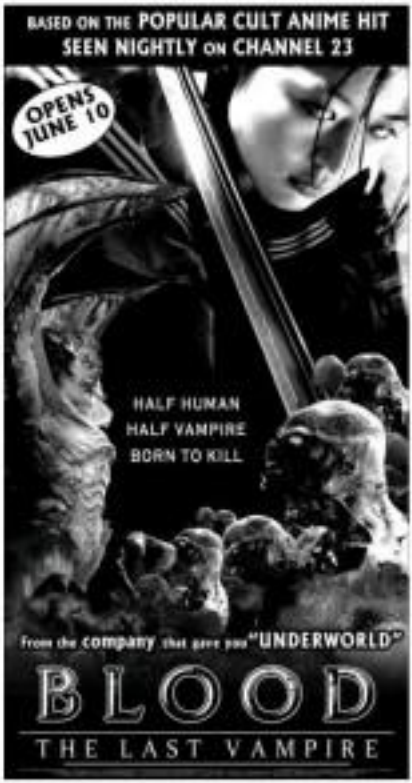
Pat Chong Admin. Lifetime Achievement award went to Mitzi Gaites.

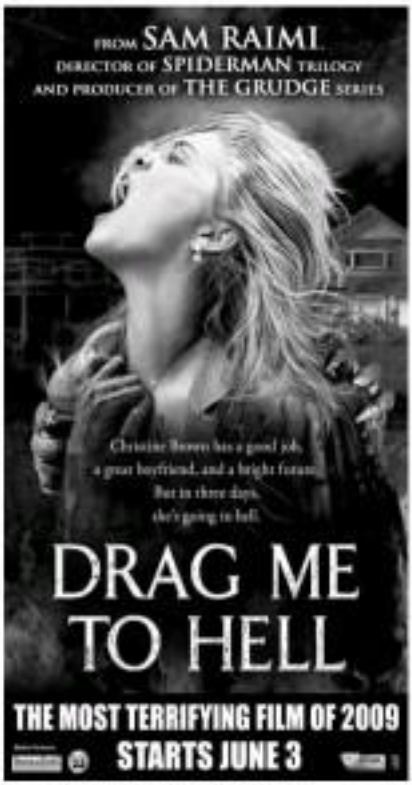
"Full force ang mga Filipinos ng Filmmakers," Lee told the Inquirer.

Hector Pagsanjan was declared Most Promising Actor of the Year. Bituen Escovido, Dueling el Dia Perez, and John Lloyd Cruz and Sarah Geronimo, Box-el Bet Night.

TV airing is on ABS-CBN on June 21.

E-mail: bgcruz@inquirer.com.ph





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2 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
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2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

STARMILLS

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
2 DIKO NA IS LOLO
3 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
4 ANGELS & DEMONS
5 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
6 TERMINATOR: SALVATION

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Fil-Am in 'Spidey' director's new film

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Rathvon V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—FIL-AM ACTOR REGGIE Lee has his fun as the world's most "spidey" (arch-up) employee in "Drag Me to Hell," director Sam Raimi's delightful return to the horror genre.

It has been a long time since we had laughs and scares at the same time while watching a movie. Critics and fans are cheering that Sam is back with a movie that harkens back to his "The Evil Dead" films, which combines horror and humor. Sam, of course, went on to direct "A Simple Plan" and a certain series of films that features a man in spandex who runs about buildings. He is planning a new "Evil Dead" movie that will be released next year.

In "Drag Me to Hell," which was shown recently in Cannes, Alison Lohman stars as Christine, a bank loan officer desperately hoping to fill a recent assistant manager position. The boss (David Paetzel) is considering both her and Mrs. Babbo (Reggie) for the promotion, but Mrs. Babbo has the edge because he has perfected his fan-tasting skills. (A reviewer described Reggie's fan characters as sleep-...e accomplishment to the Queen City native's performance.)

When a strange old woman, Mrs. Ganush Rusina Raimi), comes to plead for an extension of her mortgage loan, Christine goes against her good nature and ignores the elderly's tearful begging to impress the boss.

Christine's hard line approach sets into motion the series of events that let him unleash his mastery of B-movie horror schlock which will make moviegoers giggle and sit on the edge of their seats at the same time. Suffice it to say Lorna goes to town in her vengeful, gripy-cause role that will make Bella Flores proud. Also in the cast of "Drag Me..." are Justin Long, Adriana Barraza and Dileep Rao.

In keeping with the playful spirit of "Drag Me...," we conducted the following Q&A with the LA-based Reggie, who also appeared in "Star Trek," "Tropic Thunder," the "Pirates of the Caribbean" and numerous TV shows.

I read that Sam Raimi and his brother, Ivan, wrote your part originally for their other brother, Ted. But Sam was quoted as saying that you were "great" during the casting process. So you ended up with the role while Ted had a one-line only as another character.

Ummm ... thank you, Sam?! Sam and Ivan, and for that matter, the entire production team, were great from pre-production to post-production. So even if the role was written for Ted, I never would've known it by how incredibly collaborative Sam was not only on-set but also during the post-production process. He even worked up with the role while Ted had a one-line only as another character.

Ummm ... thank you, Sam?! Sam and Ivan, and for that matter, the entire production team, were great from pre-production to post-production. So even if the role was written for Ted, I never would've known it by how incredibly collaborative Sam was not only on-set but also during the post-production process. Did I hear? It may have been a scheduling issue with Ted or ... thank you, Ted?

Was Ted upset about it?

I never had the pleasure of actually crossing paths with Ted but in my idealistic imagination ... yes, he was the best sport ever and I relish that Sam would use me to crazy use of his movies!

As an actor in Hollywood, how much of a mark-up (like your character in) do you have to be sometimes to get those roles?

Was my character a mark-up? God, I thought I was pretty subtle about that ... oh well! In Hollywood? Hmm ... 90:10 percent. No, just kidding. I would hope that I've gotten my roles based on the merit of my work and a bit from being a nice person which, OK, may be misconstrued as making up. But hopefully not!

Your character's name, Siu Babbo, is definitely not Asian-sounding. Be Asian and Proud Asian are terrible jokes about the name?

Well, I did find out from some of Sam's relatives at the premiere that the name comes from a relative. Subsequently after the premiere,

REGGIE | 31

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BAGAHOLIC

Fil-Am in 'Spidey' director's new film

From page 17

some of Sam's family came up to me and said that Sin was their favorite character. Weirdest Go figure. I do give him great credit for not changing. He came to something more "Asian" sounding...it was never even brought up.

How much did you enjoy poking fun at a stereotype, the cute-and-strong Asian?

I felt right at home. Although I don't think the word "emotive" falls into the category of Asian stereotype.

Does this role mean that you might have a stronger chance now of appearing in Sam's coming "Spider-Man" 4 and 5?

God, I hope so.

Complete the sentence: Although Lohman is...

A total sweetheart and professional of an actress!

And David Strathairn, who plays your boss, the one you nuke up-to, is...

Dry and funny ... if only I could have half of his comic timing! Sheesh!

Lorna Raver was absolutely convincing as a gross, scary character—she might have a bit from her beginning with this movie. How is she in person, when she was not in character?

Focused. So much so that I don't think I ever overcame her awe in character during the filming. But at the premiere, she was gracious, lovely, with a much more beautiful smile than the character she plays.

How was Sam different from the directors you've worked with?

One word—collaborative. OK, two—artsy. OK, three—brilliant.

How much fun did you have filming "Star Trek"? Were you tempted to challenge John Cho to a martial arts showdown for the right to play Sulu, a role originated by George Takei?

I had a great time filming "Star Trek." It was one of those roles that was just offered to me and I thought, heck, it will be fun just to be a part of the project. And I do know John. I don't think he has a martial arts background so Ed definitely has the upper hand on that one. Thank you for that idea! Just kidding. Johnis a great person and deserves his success.

And can you talk about Takei as a pioneering Asian-American actor in Hollywood? He paved the way for the Haggis Lees and John Chos in this world.

He definitely made a name for himself as an actor at a time when there weren't many prominent Asian-American actors on the scene, especially on television. George helped promote the awareness of the Asian as a human being, rather than just a race. The way he has handled his professional and personal life is exemplary. He was/is/always will be a class act and thankful for his contribution.

Were you surprised at how much the critics and awards groups loved Yun Cruise and Robert Downey Jr.'s performances in "Tropic Thunder"?

No. Well, OK, for a comedy—which rarely gets lauded—yes. But for the amazing work that they did—no.

What's next for you?

Hopefully more Sam Raimi movies! Just kidding ... but not really! OK, for real. I'm filming a television series written by Christopher McQuarrie ("The Usual Suspects," "Valkyrie"). I'm in Mexico City on and off from October last year to March of this year. My life on location now. It's far from Studio and it's an incredibly fulfilling, entertaining and creative experience! I'm still recovering!

(E-mail the columnist at rmagsino_2000@yahoo.com and read his blog "The Signals Report," at http://blogs.inquirer.net/signalsreport).

Oh, those unstoppable ...

From page 18

Reviewers in May 1992, Leno debuted as "Tonight" host a few days later. AP

Top-of the tabloids

The top show this series in PDI tabloid Bandera this week. (And why we are moved, I've are moved.)

•Kevin at Vanessa: Kendi nagpasyang sa kids. (What—as in finding love first?)

•Vanessa at Angelica, sinabing si Boyet Gutiérrez (Banse na naman?)

•Dennis nililiit dito kay Bamboo (para tanong ngayon ang demands? (Take a no from Kathryn! Put the hostilities, kid close, huh!)

•Sabadeluge for at Hayden as sex video nila ni Kathryn Hahh? (But not too high to restart the rumors!)

•Carmina Hayden sex video binebenta ng PDI sa TV network. (For airing in full? With sponsors? Yikes.)

•Bela, binebet pawiho lang ay ako si pakikipagsiuli. (Ipaumbliwalan.)

•Carina: Augustphong mag-wanin? (Ano'ng wanin.)

•Jay at Shaina carousing with ang anak. (Ahaaron do drip from the mouths of your moms.)

•Richard Gomez, Lucy Torres 'di nakabisa ng baby sa US. (Kasama ba ang US sa plano?)

•Ben Mosier pinapak si Jean Mills, mag-nan-piano pa. (Sobrang sarap!)

•Nagsa-away si Hayden Kho galing sa dang. (We just have to ask: Retouched bapa yan?)

•Nora Aunor sori-sori si Phil. si 2010, aksaon as Aakapo? (Why, where, what and how, now?)

•Sinilyan nina John Lloyd Cruz at Luis Manzano pinalalpakan (As in, "Brad"?).

•Garina Sanchez bida-coming sa local ads ni Mar Roxas. (Maybe just in yes long the sarapsnac, why not?)

•Kaa nina Hayden at Karina mauuwi lang sa wala. (Hating we're starting to get that feeling. Or, maaaaari as isang "C" words.)

•Derick Ramsay kay Hayden: Baka magaway ka talaga dyan! (Ahuh!.)

•Cristine Reyes sinasabing ipinga-tapa ABS. (She's back to the intrigues pwd!)

E-mail us: nuhan@inquirer.com.ph

CONGRATULATIONS

DANTE MENDOZA

for winning the coveted
BEST DIRECTOR award
for the film **KINATAY** in the prestigious
Palme D'Or Competition in Cannes.

PALME D'OR

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Oh, those unstoppable sex videos

A SOURCE ALLEGES THAT IN a sex-enticement (thank goodness) sex video, Female Celebrity was "violated" in a rather unconventional way.

Suffice it to say that it involved bottled water. Ouch.

In yet another video, Sweet (or so we all thought) Actress was rather aggressive in bed...recalling a video elder in her wardrobe showing do.

Secret ties

Charmaine Actress has a secret.

She allegedly squeezed from her husband because of her "close friendship" with Younger Singer.

A reader insists that CSs youngest child looks uncannily like VS.

While we're at it, DJ's persona with brain a disconcerting resemblance to GA, when she was younger and slimmer.

Family ban

The wider family of Controversial Celebrity is beholden to his whole childhood.

A spy swears that, after only a few months on a couple, EC borrowed P6 million from JSC to save his parents from financial ruin.

Source quipped: "So wonder CC's family is advocating his dysfunctional relationship with EC."

More ties that bind

BG trusted CC's mom so a lot, say, said the reader.

CC's mom bought Jake Louis Vuitton vests in Greenhills to give as pasalubong to relatives abroad. Unfortunately, US Customs officials discovered the bootleg bags and detained CC's mom for several hours!

BGS connections got CC's mom off the hook, of course.

Forgotten loan

Rep. Pinakamot got a million-peso loan from a government-controlled outfit.

To avoid paying, CP hooked up with Cordillera Federation.

Loan, as quickly, CP's loan was forgotten ... or CC was written off, many said on industry insider.

Hello, goodbye

LONDON—Scottish singing sensation Susan Boyle has considered quitting "Britain's Got Talent," which brought her overnight fame, show judge Piers Morgan said Thursday.

Morgan said the 48-year-old spinster dubbed Susty Angel, was struggling to cope with pressure after she reportedly unleashed a foul-mouthed tirade at the hotel where the contestants are staying.

Writing on his blog earlier, Morgan, a former tabloid newspaper editor, described Boyle as a "frightened rabbit" and called for her exit to "hush all." Morgan said Boyle showed the weight of expectation on her shoulders via a wobbly performance last weekend.

Boyle, a hairdresser's lives for to come out on top in the BGT finals today. AFP

RUSHES SUNDAY

Got it first!

OXFRAME, CALIFORNIA—It was a radio disc jockey to remind Jay Leno where he'll stand in "Tonight Show" history when he walks off the stage for the last time Friday.

Leno runs as the urbanite of one of his famous stunage cues when he heard the DJ conduct a pop quiz. Who's the second-longest-running host of "Tonight," after Johnny Carson?

"The guy on the radio actually got it before I did," Leno said Thursday, smiling.

He will have passed as impresario 17 years as "Tonight" host, but well short of Carson's three decades that ended with his re-

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